



**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education
Washington, D.C. 20202-7100**

APPLICATION PACKAGE

Smaller Learning Communities Program

FY 2004 “Regular” Competition

**Form Approved
OMB No. 1830-0552
Expiration Date: 4/30/2008
CFDA Number 84.215L**

**DATED MATERIAL-OPEN IMMEDIATELY
Closing Date: June 7, 2005**

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1. Letter from Assistant Secretary Susan Sclafani



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program. The purpose of this program is to support the creation or expansion of small, safe, and successful learning environments in large public high schools, through competitive grants to local educational agencies (LEAs). The SLC program is authorized under section 5441 of Subpart 4 of Part D of Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 USC 7249), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

In implementing the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the US Department of Education has developed a strategic plan that will serve as the roadmap for all Departmental activities and investments. The plan specifically focuses on, among other areas, improving the performance of high school students and holding schools accountable for raising the academic achievement level of all students. The Department will work with States to ensure that students attain the strong academic knowledge and skills necessary for future success in postsecondary education and adult life. The Department will encourage students to take more rigorous courses, especially in the areas of math and science. In addition, the Department of Education is committed to ensuring that our Nation's schools are safe environments conducive to learning.

One strategy that holds promise for improving the academic performance of our Nation's young people is the establishment of smaller learning communities as components of comprehensive school improvement plans. The Smaller Learning Communities Program was first funded in the Department's FY 2000 Appropriations Act, which included \$45 million for the program. Currently, the Department has awarded 417 three-year implementation grants, and 367 one-year planning grants. Awards were and will again be made to LEAs applying on behalf of large public high schools or large high schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. For the purposes of this program, a large high school is defined as a school that includes grades 11 and 12 and enrolls at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above at the time of application.

For FY 2004, Congress appropriated an additional \$165 million for the Smaller Learning Communities Program grants. Successful applicants will demonstrate that all high schools proposed as participants will become effective and safe environments where all students feel known, supported, and motivated to succeed in college and chosen careers. Competitive applications will identify research-based practices and strategies intended to meet this goal. Under the statute, grant funds may be used to redesign schools into structures such as academies, house plans, schools-within-a-school, and magnet programs. Funds may also be used for personalization strategies that complement or take advantage of smaller learning

communities. Examples of such strategies include freshman transition activities, multi-year groupings, alternative scheduling, advisory or advocate systems, and academic teaming.

This competition is the second competition run by the Department of Education for FY 2004 Smaller Learning Communities Program funds. The first competition awards funds to local agencies not only to create and expand SLC projects, but also to implement promising supplemental reading programs within freshman academy SLCs – and to participate in a national evaluation of supplemental reading programs. LEAs may apply on behalf of eligible schools in BOTH competitions.

This application package contains all of the necessary instructions and forms needed to submit a complete application to the U. S. Department of Education. This package also includes information on the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications, and non-regulatory guidance, all of which provides important information regarding the FY 2004 grant competition. Please refer to the SLC web site, <http://www.ed.gov/programs/slcp/applicant.html> for further information about the program and how to apply.

We look forward to receiving your application, and working with you to promote academic achievement through smaller learning communities.

Sincerely,

Susan Sclafani
Assistant Secretary
for Vocational and
Adult Education

2. Introducing the Smaller Learning Communities Program

The Smaller Learning Communities Program provides financial incentives to encourage large high schools to undertake the creation or expansion of smaller learning communities through research-based restructuring. Such strategies include establishing small learning clusters, “houses”, career academies, magnet schools or other approaches to creating schools within schools; block scheduling; personal adult advocates, teacher-advisory systems and other mentoring strategies; reduced teaching loads; and other innovations designed to create a more personalized high school experience for students and improve student achievement. Examples of downsizing activities that restructure large high schools include:

- (1) Creating academies or sub-groups;
- (2) Creating house plans either across grade levels or by grade levels;
- (3) Creating schools-within-a-school; and,
- (4) Creating magnet programs.

Additionally, funds can be used to support strategies that complement or take advantage of restructured environments in order to create a more personalized learning environment for students. Examples of strategies that make schools “feel” smaller include:

- (1) Freshman transition activities;
- (2) Multi-year groups;
- (3) Alternative scheduling;
- (4) Adult advocate or advisory systems; and,
- (5) Academic teaming.

The definitions and terms used above are more fully described in Appendix C.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Smaller Learning Communities Program is authorized under Title V, Part D, Subpart 4 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) (20 U.S.C. 7249), as amended by Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is the most sweeping reform of Federal education policy in a generation. It is designed to implement the President's agenda to improve America's public schools by: (1) Ensuring accountability for results, (2) providing unprecedented flexibility in the use of Federal funds in implementing education programs, (3) focusing on proven educational methods, and (4) expanding educational choice for parents. Since the enactment of the original ESEA in 1965, the Federal Government has spent more than \$130 billion to improve public schools. Unfortunately, this investment in education has not yet eliminated the achievement gap between affluent and lower-income students or between minority students and non-minority students.

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) has developed a strategic plan that serves as the roadmap for all Departmental activities and investments. The plan specifically focuses on, among other areas, improving the performance of all high school students and holding schools accountable for raising the academic achievement level of all students. The Department will work with States to ensure that students attain the strong academic knowledge and skills necessary for future success in postsecondary education and adult life. The Department will encourage students to take more rigorous

courses, especially in the areas of math and science. In addition, the Department is committed to ensuring that our Nation's schools are safe environments conducive to learning.

A strategy that may hold promise for improving the academic performance of our Nation's young people is the establishment of smaller learning communities as components of comprehensive high school improvement plans. The problems of large high schools and the related question of optimal school size have been debated for the last 40 years and are of growing interest today.

While the research on school size to date has been largely non- experimental, some evidence suggests that smaller schools may have advantages over larger schools. Research suggests that the positive outcomes associated with smaller schools stem from the schools' ability to create close, personal environments in which teachers can work collaboratively, with each other and with a small set of students, to challenge students and support learning. A variety of structures and operational strategies are thought to provide important supports for smaller learning environments; some data suggest that these approaches offer substantial advantages to both teachers and students (Ziegler 1993; Carroll 1994).

Structural changes for recasting large schools as a set of smaller learning communities (SLCs) are described in the Conference Report for the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000 (Pub. L. 106-113, H.R. Conference Report No. 106-479, at 1240 (1999)). Such methods include establishing small learning clusters, "houses," career academies, magnet programs, and schools-within-a-school. Other activities may include: Freshman transition activities, advisory and adult advocate systems, academic teaming, multi-year groupings, "extra help" or accelerated learning options for students or groups of students entering below grade level, and other innovations designed to create a more personalized high school experience for students. These structural changes and personalization strategies, by themselves, are not likely to improve student academic achievement. They might, however, create valuable opportunities to improve the quality of instruction and curriculum, and to provide the individualized attention and academic support that all students need to excel academically. The SLC Program encourages local education agencies (LEAs) to set higher academic expectations for all of their students and to implement reforms that will provide the effective instruction and personalized academic and social support students need to meet those expectations.

CHANGES IN THE FY 2004 NOTICE OF FINAL PRIORITIES

Category	FY 2003	FY 2004	Justification
Planning Grants	Under the FY 2003 competition, both 12-month planning grants and 36-month implementation grants were awarded.	Planning grants will not be awarded under the FY 2004 competition.	Resources, planning tools, and SLC research are now much more prevalent and accessible for districts and schools interested in SLCs than at the outset of the SLC program. In order to focus the SLC program on actual implementation of SLC structures and strategies to improve academic achievement, planning grants will not be awarded, however grantees will be allowed to continue planning activities in the first year as they begin implementation or expansion of SLCs at the targeted school.
Project Period	Implementation grants were awarded for up to a 36-month, federally supported, period. However, grantees were also required to provide a 12-month plan for sustainability and year 4 budget using other resources.	Implementation grants will be awarded for up to a 60-month project period.	With a 36-month project period, students who enter high school in the first year of the grant will be in the 11 th grade at the end of the grant. Their experiences in 12 th grade and their post-high school outcomes will be unknown. Additionally, some grantees may need more time to undertake the extensive restructuring associated with a successful SLC project that makes meaningful changes in curriculum and instructional practices.

Size of Awards (Implementation Grants)	The size of awards was based on the school population ranging from \$250,000 to \$550,000 per school.	The award size for eligible schools ranges from \$650,000 to \$1,175,000 depending on the size of the school.	Since the project period increased from 36 to 60 months, it was necessary to increase the award amount accordingly. Additionally, the grant amount was increased to provide additional support for independent evaluation activities and for comprehensive strategies and interventions to assist students who enter high school with reading or math skills that are significantly below grade level. Moreover, we have been seeking to focus SLC grantees on the more difficult work of making the curriculum more rigorous and improving instruction, and cautioning them against pursuing structural changes alone. Implementing these more complex reforms is likely to be more costly than changing the organizational structure of schools alone.
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Allow former implementation grantees from the first and second SLC competitions to apply for an implementation grant.	Schools that received an implementation grant in a previous competition were barred from receiving another implementation grant.	LEAs may apply on behalf of schools that received an implementation grant in the first and second SLC competitions.	The first and second cohort of SLC grantees that were awarded implementation grants were not required to undertake a number of the activities that have been required in subsequent competitions, including implementing SLCs “wall-to-wall,” interventions for students who enter high school with reading/language arts or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level, and an external evaluation.
Reduce the number and complexity of the selection criteria.	There were over 40 selection factors for implementation grantees in addition to the requirements and priorities.	The selection criteria are condensed in the FY 2004 RFP.	Condensing the criteria will not jeopardize or weaken the content, but significantly reduce its complexity.
High-Risk Status	The FY 2003 RFP indicated that “the grantee’s failure to show improvement on the required performance indicators by the end of the first year of implementation” could trigger financial and other sanctions by the department.	A circumstance that may result in the designation of high-risk status is a decline in student achievement after two years of implementation, the threshold at which we would consider applying sanctions.	Part of the Department’s role in administering grant funds under the SLC program is to ensure that those funds are used in a manner consistent with the aims of the grant program.
Allow educational service agencies to apply for funds on behalf of high schools.	Educational service agencies were not allowed to apply for a grant in the FY 2003 competition.	Clarify that educational service agencies are eligible to apply for funds.	Educational service agencies are included in the ESEA definition of the local educational agency. The educational service agency must include in its application evidence that the entity that has governing authority over the eligible high school support the application.

Attendance at ED meetings	N/A	Applicants must include in the proposed budget estimates for the project director to attend a directors' meeting in Washington, DC and for a project team to attend a Regional Institute.	These meetings will convene grantees to review ED's requirements and regulations, discuss their goals, objectives, and evaluation plan, and help grantees create an action plan. The grantees will also learn about TA opportunities and network with other grantees. While such meetings have been held in the past, grantees were not asked to budget for these meetings in the notice. This restricted some grantees from attending the meetings.
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a. Who is eligible to receive a grant?

Local educational agencies (LEAs), including schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and educational service agencies, applying on behalf of up to 10 large public high schools, are eligible to apply for an implementation grant.

An educational service agency is only eligible if it can show in its application that the entity or entities with governing authority over the eligible high schools on whose behalf the educational service agency is applying supports the application.

“Large high schools” are schools that include grades 11 and 12 and enroll at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above. Applicants may work independently or in partnership with other public agencies and/or private non-profit organizations. A group of LEAs is also eligible to apply, following procedures specified in 34 CFR 75.127-75.129 of EDGAR. For the purposes of this program, an individual LEA or group application may not request funding for more than ten individually eligible schools. LEAs must include the name(s) of the eligible school(s) and the number of students enrolled in each school. Applicants may provide eligibility data, based upon enrollment during the current school year or the most recently completed school year. We will not accept applications from LEAs applying on behalf of schools that are being constructed and do not have an active student enrollment at the time of application.

b. What will be the time period, size and number of grants?

For a 60-month implementation grant, LEAs may receive, on behalf of a single school, \$650,000 to \$1,175,000, depending upon the size of the school. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may request up to \$11,750,000 per implementation grant depending on the size and number of schools. LEAs must stay within the maximum school allocations when determining their group award

request. Implementation grants are designed to support extensive redesign and improvement efforts, professional development, direct student services, and other activities associated with creating or expanding a smaller learning community program. In order to ensure sufficient implementation funds at the local level, LEAs may not request funds for more than 10 schools under a single implementation application.

The following chart provides the ranges of awards per high school size for 60-month grants:

SLC Grant Award Ranges	
Student Enrollment	Award Ranges Per School
1,000-2,000 Students	\$650,000-\$800,000
2,001-3,000 Students	\$650,000-\$925,000
3,001-4,000 Students	\$650,000-\$1,050,000
4,001 Students and up	\$650,000-\$1,175,000

The actual size of awards will be based on a number of factors. These factors include the scope, quality, and comprehensiveness of the proposed project and the range of awards indicated in the application.

Applications that request more funds than the maximum amount specified for any school or for the total grant will not be read as part of the regular application process. However, if the Secretary selects applications to be funded, it appears that additional funds remain available, the Secretary may choose to read these additional applications that requested funds exceeding the maximum amounts specified. If the Secretary chooses to fund any of these additional applications, applicants will be required to work with the Department to revise their proposed budgets to fit within the appropriate funding range.

An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the original SLC Program competition held in 2000 (Cohort 1) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in this application package. An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the competition held in 2002 (Cohort 2) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in this application package. LEAs will not be able to apply for funding on behalf of schools that received an SLC implementation grant under the competitions held in 2003 (Cohort 3) and 2004 (Cohort 4).

Applicants should note that the requirements listed in this notice are material requirements. Failure to comply with any requirement or with any elements of the grantee's application would subject

the grantee to administrative action, including but not limited to, designation as a “high risk” grantee, the imposition of special conditions, or termination of the grant. Circumstances that might cause the Department to take such action include, but are not limited to: the grantee showing a decline in achievement in two years of implementation of the grant; the grantee’s failure to make substantial progress in completing the milestones outlined in the management plan included in the application; and the grantee’s expenditure of funds in a manner that is inconsistent with the budget as submitted in the application.

NUMBER OF GRANTS

The Secretary anticipates making approximately 150 implementation grants. However, please note that the Department of Education is not bound by any estimates in this document.

c. Are the award ranges for the entire 60-month period or per year?

The award ranges listed above for each school size are for the full 60-month project period.

d. What activities are allowable?

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

Examples of activities that may be conducted under an implementation grant include—

- (1) Implementing and expanding strategies for creating the smaller learning community or communities within the designated large high schools;
- (2) Implementing and expanding complementary personalization strategies as well as effective and innovative changes in curriculum and instruction, geared to high State content standards and academic achievement standards within the designated large high schools;
- (3) Providing professional development for school staff as it relates to the needs of the staff and the goals of the smaller learning communities;
- (4) Involving parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including faith-based organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities, as facilitators of activities that promote the schools’ goals, as well as to provide links between students and their community;
- (5) Obtaining the services of outside experts in the implementation of the smaller learning community. Assistance may include curriculum development, leadership strategies, community consensus building, data collection, or evaluation design; and
- (6) Providing stipends and release time for teachers, administrators, and community members involved in the implementation or expansion of the smaller learning community.

e. What priorities apply to this program?

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2004 this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

Absolute Priority: Helping All Students to Succeed in Rigorous Academic Courses

This priority will support projects that will implement a coherent set of strategies and interventions that are designed to ensure that all students who enter high school with reading/language arts or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level “catch up” quickly so that, by no later than the end of the 10th grade, they have acquired the reading/language arts and mathematics skills they need to participate successfully in rigorous academic courses that will equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to transition successfully to postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training.

These accelerated learning strategies and interventions must:

- (1) Be grounded in the findings of scientifically based and other rigorous research;
- (2) Include the use of age-appropriate instructional materials and teaching and learning strategies;
- (3) Provide additional instruction and academic support during the regular school day, which may be supplemented by instruction that is provided before or after school, on weekends, and at other times when school is not in session; and
- (4) Provide sustained professional development and ongoing support for teachers and other personnel who are responsible for delivering instruction.

The Secretary will fund only applicants that meet the absolute priority described above and that meet all of the other requirements for this competition described elsewhere in this application and in the accompanying notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, and the notice inviting applications for new awards.

NOTE: Applicants must clearly identify the proposed grant-funded smaller learning communities in their application. Additionally, students must be placed in smaller learning communities based on student/parent choice or through random assignment.

3. Application Requirements

a. What selection criteria apply to this competition?

The Department will use five (5) criteria to evaluate applications for SLC grants. The relative weights for each criterion are indicated in parentheses. Our intent in this section is to identify the selection criteria and help applicants understand how they will be applied during the review process. A peer review panel will make a careful evaluation of applications. Each panelist will evaluate the applications against the criteria listed below. The panel results are advisory in nature and not binding on the Secretary. The Secretary will use the following selection criteria and associated point values in evaluating applications for SLC grants:

- (1) The maximum score for SLC grants is 100 points.
- (2) The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

Need for the Project. (10 points)

In determining the need for the proposed project, we will consider the extent to which the applicant will:

(1) Assist schools that have the greatest need for assistance, as indicated by, relative to other high schools within the State, one or more of the factors below:

(A) Student performance on the academic assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics administered by the State under part A, title I of the ESEA, including gaps in the performance of all students and that of student subgroups, such as economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, or students with limited English proficiency.

(B) The school's dropout rate, and gaps in the graduation rate between all students and student subgroups.

(C) Disciplinary actions.

(D) The percentage of graduates who enroll in postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training in the semester following graduation, and gaps between all students and student subgroups.

Foundation for Implementation. (20 points)

In determining the quality of the implementation plan for the proposed project, we will consider the extent to which:

(1) (5 points) Teachers and administrators within each school support the proposed project and have been and will continue to be involved in its planning and development, including, particularly, those teachers who will be directly affected by the proposed project.

(2) (5 points) Parents, students, and other community stakeholders support the proposed project and have been and will continue to be involved in its planning and development.

(3) (5 points) The proposed project is consistent with, and will advance, State and local initiatives to increase student achievement and narrow gaps in achievement between all students and student subgroups.

(4) (5 points) The applicant demonstrates that it has carried out sufficient planning and preparatory activities to enable it to begin to implement the proposed project at the beginning of the school year immediately following receipt of an award.

Quality of the Project Design. (30 points)

In determining the quality of the project design for the SLC project, we will consider the extent to which--

(1) (5 points) The applicant will implement or expand strategies, new organizational structures, or other changes in practice that are likely to create an environment in which a core group of teachers and other adults within the school know the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well, closely monitor each student's progress, and provide the academic and other support each student needs to succeed;

(2) (5 points) The applicant proposes research-based strategies that are likely to improve overall student achievement and other outcomes (including graduation rates and enrollment in postsecondary education), narrow any gaps in achievement between all students and student subgroups, and address the particular needs identified by the school under the paragraph titled Need for the Project, such as--

(A) More rigorous academic curriculum for all students, and the provision of academic support to struggling students who need assistance to master more challenging academic content;

(B) More intensive and individualized educational counseling and career and college guidance, provided through mentoring, teacher advisories, adult advocates, or other means;

(C) Strategies designed to increase average daily attendance, increase the percentage of students who transition from the 9th to 10th grade, and improve the graduation rate; and

(D) Expanding opportunities for students to participate in advanced placement courses and other academic and technical courses that offer both high school and postsecondary credit.

(3) (5 points) The applicant will implement accelerated learning strategies and interventions that will assist students who enter the school with reading/language or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level and that:

(A) Are designed to equip participating students with grade-level reading/language arts and mathematics skills by no later than the end of the 10th grade; and that--

(B) Are grounded in scientifically based research;

(C) Include the use of age-appropriate instructional materials and teaching and learning strategies;

(D) Provide additional instructional and academic support during the regular school day, which may be supplemented by instruction that is provided before or after school, on weekends, and at other times when school is not in session;

(E) Will be delivered with sufficient intensity to improve the reading/language arts or math skills, as appropriate, of participating students; and

(F) Include sustained professional development and ongoing support for teachers and other personnel who are responsible for delivering instruction.

(4) (5 points) The applicant will provide high-quality professional development throughout the project period that advances the understanding of teachers, administrators, and other school staff of effective, research-based instructional strategies for improving the academic achievement of students, including, particularly, students with academic skills that are significantly below grade level, and provide the knowledge and skills those staff need to participate effectively in the development, expansion, or implementation of an SLC.

(5) (5 points) The proposed project fits into a comprehensive district high school improvement strategy to increase the academic achievement of all district high school students, reduce gaps between the achievement of all students and student subgroups, and prepare students to enter postsecondary education or the workforce.

(6) (5 points) The proposed project is part of a cohesive plan that uses funds provided under the ESEA, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, or other Federal programs, as well as local, State, and private funds sufficient to ensure continuation of efforts after Federal support ends.

Quality of the Management Plan. (20 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, we consider the following factors:

(1) (5 points) The adequacy of the proposed management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities and detailed timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(2) (5 points) The extent to which time commitments of the project director and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to implement the SLC project effectively.

(3) (5 points) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and other key personnel; and

(4) (5 points) The adequacy of resources, including the extent to which the budget is adequate and costs are directly related to the objectives and SLC activities.

Quality of the SLC Project Evaluation. (20 points)

In determining the quality of the proposed project evaluation conducted by an independent, third party evaluator, we consider the following factors--

(1) (5 points) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed SLC project;

(2) (5 points) The extent to which the evaluation will collect and report accurate qualitative and quantitative data that will be useful in assessing the success and progress of implementation, including, at a minimum--

(A) Measures of student academic achievement that provide data for the performance indicators identified in the application, including results that are disaggregated for economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and other subgroups identified by the applicant; and

(B) Other measures identified by the applicant in the application as performance indicators;

(3) (5 points) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely and regular feedback to the LEA and the school on the success and progress of implementation, and identify areas for needed improvement.

(4) (5 points) The qualifications and relevant training and experience of the independent evaluator.

b. Additional application requirements

• REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Applicants for implementation grants must describe their:

- (1) Project objectives including measurable goals, objectives and timelines; and
- (2) Indicators to gauge progress toward meeting project objectives.

In addition, we require implementation grantees to collect data that address the performance indicators for this program, in order to produce annual performance reports. These reports will document the grantee's yearly progress toward expected project objectives. The Secretary will use these reports to measure the success of the grantee's project, as well as the effects of the Department of Education's Smaller Learning Communities grant program nationwide. Grantees may collect additional site-based data to assess the progress of their program. We require applicants to identify in their application specific performance indicators and annual performance objectives for each of these indicators. Specifically, we require applicants to use the following performance indicators to measure the progress of each school:

1. The percentage of students who scored at the proficient and advanced levels on the reading/language arts and mathematics assessments used by the State to determine whether a school has made adequate yearly progress under Part A of Title I of ESEA, as well as these percentages disaggregated by subject matter and the following subgroups:

- a. Major racial and ethnic groups;
- b. Students with disabilities;
- c. Students with limited English proficiency; and
- d. Economically disadvantaged students.

2. The school's graduation rate, as defined in the State's approved accountability plan for Part A of Title I of ESEA;

3. The percentage of graduates who enroll in postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training for the semester following graduation; and

4. The percentage of graduates who are employed by the end of the first quarter after they graduate (e.g., for students who graduate in May or June, this would be September 30).

Other appropriate indicators the LEA may choose to identify in its application, such as rates of average daily attendance and year-to-year retention; achievement and gains in English proficiency of limited English proficient students; the incidence of school violence, drug and alcohol use, and disciplinary actions; or the percentage of students completing advanced placement courses, and the rate of passing advanced placement tests (such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate) and courses for college credit.

Applicants are required to include in their applications baseline data for each of these indicators and identify performance objectives for each year of the project period. We further require recipients of grants report annually on the extent to which each school achieves its performance objectives for each indicator during the preceding school year. We require grantees to include in these reports comparable data, if available, for the preceding three school years so that trends in performance will be more apparent.

Applicants are required to include as Appendix A the most recent School Report Card produced by the State or the LEA to inform the public about the characteristics of the school and its students, including information about student academic achievement and other student outcomes.

Upon notification of award, grantees will be required to submit student outcome data for three years preceding the baseline year. This report will be submitted using the Department's electronic data reporting system for the SLC Program.

- **Consortium Applications and Governing Authority**

In an effort to encourage systemic, LEA-level reform efforts, we permit an individual LEA to submit only one application on behalf of multiple schools. Accordingly, the LEA is required to specify in its application which high schools would participate.

In addition, we require that an LEA applying for a grant under this competition apply only on behalf of a high school or high schools for which it has governing authority, unless the LEA is an educational service agency applying in the manner described in the section in this notice entitled Educational Service Agencies. An LEA, however, may form a consortium with another LEA and submit a joint application for funds. In such an instance, the consortium may apply on behalf of up to 10 high schools and follow the procedures for group applications described in 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). An LEA is eligible for only one grant whether the LEA applies independently or as part of a consortium.

- **Educational Service Agencies**

We permit an educational service agency to apply on behalf of eligible high schools only if the educational service agency includes in its application evidence that the entity or entities that have governing authority over each of the eligible high schools supports the application.

- **Student Placement within the Broader SLC Project**

Applicants must include in their applications a description of how students will be selected or placed such that students will not be placed according to skills or any other measure, but will be placed at random or by student/parent choice and not pursuant to testing or other judgments.

- **Including All Students**

We require applicants for grants to create or expand an SLC project that will include every student within the school be no later than the end of the fifth school year of implementation. Elsewhere in this package, we define an SLC as environment in which a group of teachers and other adults within the school know the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well, closely monitors each student's progress, and provides the academic and other supports each student needs to succeed.

- **Evaluation**

We require each applicant to provide assurances that it will support an evaluation of the project that provides information to the project director and school personnel, and that will be useful in gauging the project's progress and in identifying areas of improvement. Each evaluation must include an annual report for each of the first four years of the project period and a final report that will be completed at the end of the fifth year of implementation, and that will include information on implementation during the fifth year as well as information on the implementation of the project across the entire project period. We require grantees to submit each of these reports to the Department.

In addition, we require that the evaluation be conducted by an independent third party, selected by the applicant, whose role in the project is limited to conducting the evaluation.

c. What regulations apply to this program?

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99; and (b) the regulations in the Notice of Final Priorities, Application Requirements, and Selection Criteria for fiscal year 2004 as published elsewhere in the *Federal Register*.

4. Applying for the Grants

a. How to prepare an application

Carefully read the entire application package, the Notice of Final Priorities, and the Notice Inviting Applications before beginning to prepare an application. The application package clearly identifies who is eligible to apply under this competition, what applicants must propose to do, what must be contained in an application, and what criteria will be used to evaluate applications. Copies of the authorizing statute as well as supplementary materials describing how to plan and manage the Smaller Learning Communities grant are provided in this application package.

A completed application must contain the following sections, in the order provided below. Copies of all forms discussed in the following section are provided in this document.

- (1) **Application for Federal Assistance.** Use ED Form 424. The first page is the standard application face page on which you provide basic identifying information about the applicant and the application. Please note that the requirement for the employer identification number has been revised. Please indicate your D-U-N-S number. If you are unfamiliar with that number or how to

obtain one, instructions are included in the package. Please include the e-mail address of the contact person, if available.

- (1) **Coversheet for the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program application package.** The second page of your application consists of the SLC cover page indicating the name and address of each school included in the application.
- (2) **Budget Form.** Use the enclosed ED Form 524 (Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs) to provide a complete budget summary **for each year of the project.**
- (3) **Program Abstract.** Begin with a one-page abstract summarizing the proposed Smaller Learning Communities project, including enrollment data on each eligible high school and a short description of the population to be served by the project and a description of the project's objectives and activities.
- (4) **Table of Contents.** Include a table of contents listing the parts of the narrative in the order of the selection criteria and the page numbers where the parts of the narrative are found. Be sure to number the pages.
- (5) **Program Narrative.** Applications should be no more than 25 double-spaced "8.5 x 11" pages, typed on one side only, with 1" margins at top, bottom, and on both sides, and typed or word processed with twelve-point font. Describe fully the proposed project in light of the selection criteria in the order in which the criteria are listed in the application package. Do not simply paraphrase the criteria.
- (6) **Budget Narrative.** Please provide a budget narrative that explains: (1) the basis for estimating the costs of professional personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs, and any other projected expenditures; (2) how the major cost items relate to the proposed activities; (3) the cost of evaluation; and (4) a detailed description, as applicable, explaining in-kind support or funding provided by partners in the project.
- (7) **Compliance with General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427.** Include a section that describes how the program narrative (Part III) describes its compliance with GEPA's Section 427 – equitable access to and participation in federally assisted programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.
- (8) **Assurances and Certifications.** Each of the forms and assurances provided in this application package must be completed, as appropriate, and included in the application.
- (9) **Appendices.** Applicants must include the most recent School Report Card as Appendix A. Additional baseline data should be included as Appendix B. Applicants may also include supporting documentation as appendices to the narrative. This material should be concise and pertinent to the competition. Note, we consider only information contained in the application in ranking applications for funding consideration. Letters of support and other documentation sent separate from the formal application package are not considered in the review by the peer review panels.

b. Application transmittal instructions

An application for an award may be submitted by regular mail or hand-delivered. Applications may not be faxed or sent electronically. Applications must be received or postmarked on or before the deadline for transmitting applications. No supplemental or revised information from applicants—including letters of recommendation or assurances mailed separately—will be accepted after the closing date, or after an application has been submitted. We encourage applicants to carefully review the procedures for submitting their materials. If you have questions, they should be directed to the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

All applicants should submit one signed original and three additional copies of the entire application, beginning with the Cover Page (ED Form 424). Applicants should submit all copies of the application together in one package, to ensure that the Application Control Center does not log in the same application more than once. **Do not send your application, or copies of your application, to any other address within the Department of Education.**

APPLICATIONS SENT BY MAIL

Applications must be mailed to:
U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Stop 4260
Attention: CFDA 84.215L
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

(Be sure to include the correct alpha and numeric description, e.g. 84.215L.)

An application must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service Postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

If the documents are sent through the U.S. Postal Service, the Secretary does not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark, or
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

An applicant should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office. An applicant is encouraged to use registered or at least first-class mail. Each late applicant will be notified that its application will not be considered.

Note: Due to the possibility of irregular mail delivery in the Washington area, we strongly encourage applicants to use alternatives to regular mail to submit applications.

APPLICATIONS DELIVERED BY HAND/COURIER SERVICE

An application that is hand delivered must be taken to:

U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center
Potomac Center Plaza, Room 7066
550 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4260.

The Application Control Center will accept deliveries between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (Eastern standard time) daily, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays. Individuals delivering applications must use the 12th Street Entrance. Proper identification is necessary to enter the building. In order for an application sent through a Courier Service to be considered timely, the Courier Service must be in receipt of the application on or before the closing date.

All applicants submitting applications in a timely manner will receive a Grant Application Receipt Acknowledgment. If you fail to receive a notification of application receipt within thirty (30) days from the closing date, call the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

c. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

Intergovernmental review applies to each program that is subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

The objective of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and to strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for State and local government coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the State's process under Executive Order 12372. Applicants proposing to perform activities in more than one State should immediately contact the Single Point of Contact for each of those States and follow the procedure established in each of those States under the Executive order. A listing containing the Single Point of Contact for each State is included in this package.

In States that have not established a process or chosen a program for review, State, area-wide, regional, and local entities may submit comments directly to the Department.

Any State Process Recommendation and other comments submitted by a State Single Point of Contact and any comments from State, area-wide, regional, and local entities must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in the actual application notice to the following address:

The Secretary
Re: EO 12372
U.S. Department of Education
Room 7W-100
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-0124.

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications (see 34 CFR 75.102).
Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on the date indicated in the actual application notice.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE ADDRESS IS NOT THE SAME ADDRESS AS THE ONE TO WHICH THE APPLICANT SUBMITS ITS COMPLETED APPLICATION.

DO NOT SEND APPLICATIONS TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS!

Intergovernmental Review (SPOC List)

Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," was issued with the desire to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The Order allows each State to designate an entity to perform this function. Below is the official list of those entities. For those States that have a home page for their designated entity, a direct link has been provided below.

States that are not listed on this page have chosen not to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within one of these States, you may still send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency.

Contact information for Federal agencies that award grants can be found in [Appendix IV of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance](#).

<u>ARKANSAS</u> Tracy L. Copeland Manager, State Clearinghouse Office of Intergovernmental Services Department of Finance and Administration 1515 W. 7th St., Room 412 Little Rock, Arkansas 72203 Telephone: (501) 682-1074 Fax: (501) 682-5206 tlcopeland@dfa.state.ar.us	<u>CALIFORNIA</u> Grants Coordination State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research P.O. Box 3044, Room 222 Sacramento, California 95812-3044 Telephone: (916) 445-0613 Fax: (916) 323-3018 state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov
<u>DELAWARE</u> Charles H. Hopkins Executive Department Office of the Budget 540 S. Dupont Highway, 3rd Floor Dover, Delaware 19901 Telephone: (302) 739-3323 Fax: (302) 739-5661 chopkins@state.de.us	<u>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</u> Luisa Montero-Diaz Office of Partnerships and Grants Development Executive Office of the Mayor District of Columbia Government 441 4th Street, NW, Suite 530 South Washington, DC 20001 Telephone: (202) 727-8900 Fax: (202) 727-1652 opgd.eom@dc.gov
<u>FLORIDA</u> Jasmin Raffington Florida State Clearinghouse Department of Community Affairs 2555 Shumard Oak Blvd. Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100 Telephone: (850) 922-5438 Fax: (850) 414-0479 clearinghouse@dca.state.fl.us	<u>GEORGIA</u> Georgia State Clearinghouse 270 Washington Street, SW Atlanta, Georgia 30334 Telephone: (404) 656-3855 Fax: (404) 656-7901 gach@mail.opb.state.ga.us

<p><u>ILLINOIS</u></p> <p>Virginia Bova Department of Commerce and Community Affairs James R. Thompson Center 100 West Randolph, Suite 3-400 Chicago, Illinois 60601 Telephone: (312) 814-6028 Fax (312) 814-8485 vbova@commerce.state.il.us</p>	<p>IOWA</p> <p>Steven R. McCann Division of Community and Rural Development Iowa Department of Economic Development 200 East Grand Avenue Des Moines, Iowa 50309 Telephone: (515) 242-4719 Fax: (515) 242-4809 steve.mccann@ided.state.ia.us</p>
<p>KENTUCKY</p> <p>Ron Cook Department for Local Government 1024 Capital Center Drive, Suite 340 Frankfort, Kentucky 40601 Telephone: (502) 573-2382 Fax: (502) 573-2512 ron.cook@mail.state.ky.us</p>	<p>MAINE</p> <p>Joyce Benson State Planning Office 184 State Street 38 State House Station Augusta, Maine 04333 Telephone: (207) 287-3261 (207) 287-1461 (direct) Fax: (207) 287-6489 joyce.benson@state.me.us</p>
<p><u>MARYLAND</u></p> <p>Linda Janey Manager, Clearinghouse and Plan Review Unit Maryland Office of Planning 301 West Preston Street - Room 1104 Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2305 Telephone: (410) 767-4490 Fax: (410) 767-4480 linda@mail.op.state.md.us</p>	<p>MICHIGAN</p> <p>Richard Pfaff Southeast Michigan Council of Governments 535 Griswold, Suite 300 Detroit, Michigan 48226 Telephone: (313) 961-4266 Fax: (313) 961-4869 pfaff@semcog.org</p>
<p>MISSISSIPPI</p> <p>Cathy Mallette Clearinghouse Officer Department of Finance and Administration 1301 Woolfolk Building, Suite E 501 North West Street Jackson, Mississippi 39201 Telephone: (601) 359-6762 Fax: (601) 359-6758</p>	<p><u>MISSOURI</u></p> <p>Angela Boessen Federal Assistance Clearinghouse Office of Administration P.O. Box 809 Truman Building, Room 840 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102 Telephone: (573) 751-4834 Fax: (573) 522-4395 igr@mail.oa.state.mo.us</p>

<p><u>NEVADA</u> Heather Elliott Department of Administration State Clearinghouse 209 E. Musser Street, Room 200 Carson City, Nevada 89701 Telephone: (775) 684-0209 Fax: (775) 684-0260 helliott@govmail.state.nv.us</p>	<p><u>NEW HAMPSHIRE</u> Jeffrey H. Taylor Director New Hampshire Office of State Planning Attn: Intergovernmental Review Process Mike Blake 2-1/2 Beacon Street Concord, New Hampshire 03301 Telephone: (603) 271-2155 Fax: (603) 271-1728 jtaylor@osp.state.nh.us</p>
<p><u>NEW MEXICO</u> Ken Hughes Local Government Division Room 201 Bataan Memorial Building Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503 Telephone: (505) 827-4370 Fax: (505) 827-4948 khughes@dfa.state.nm.us</p>	<p><u>NORTH CAROLINA</u> Jeanette Furney Department of Administration 1302 Mail Service Center Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1302 Telephone: (919) 807-2323 Fax: (919) 733-9571 jeanette.furney@ncmail.net</p>
<p><u>NORTH DAKOTA</u> Jim Boyd Division of Community Services 600 East Boulevard Ave, Dept 105 Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0170 Telephone: (701) 328-2094 Fax: (701) 328-2308 jboyd@state.nd.us</p>	<p><u>RHODE ISLAND</u> Kevin Nelson Department of Administration Statewide Planning Program One Capitol Hill Providence, Rhode Island 02908-5870 Telephone: (401) 222-2093 Fax: (401) 222-2083 knelson@doa.state.ri.us</p>
<p><u>SOUTH CAROLINA</u> Omeagia Burgess Budget and Control Board Office of State Budget 1122 Ladies Street, 12th Floor Columbia, South Carolina 29201 Telephone: (803) 734-0494 Fax: (803) 734-0645 aburgess@budget.state.sc.us</p>	<p><u>TEXAS</u> Denise S. Francis Director, State Grants Team Governor's Office of Budget and Planning P.O. Box 12428 Austin, Texas 78711 Telephone: (512) 305-9415 Fax: (512) 936-2681 dfrancis@governor.state.tx.us</p>

<p><u>UTAH</u></p> <p>Carolyn Wright Utah State Clearinghouse Governor's Office of Planning and Budget State Capitol, Room 114 Salt Lake City, Utah 84114 Telephone: (801) 538-1535 Fax: (801) 538-1547 cwright@gov.state.ut.us</p>	<p>WEST VIRGINIA</p> <p>Fred Cutlip, Director Community Development Division West Virginia Development Office Building #6, Room 553 Charleston, West Virginia 25305 Telephone: (304) 558-4010 Fax: (304) 558-3248 fcutlip@wvdo.org</p>
<p><u>WISCONSIN</u></p> <p>Jeff Smith Section Chief, Federal/State Relations Wisconsin Department of Administration 101 East Wilson Street - 6th Floor P.O. Box 7868 Madison, Wisconsin 53707 Telephone: (608) 266-0267 Fax: (608) 267-6931 jeffrey.smith@doa.state.wi.us</p>	<p>AMERICAN SAMOA</p> <p>Pat M. Galea'i Federal Grants/Programs Coordinator Office of Federal Programs Office of the Governor/Department of Commerce American Samoa Government Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799 Telephone: (684) 633-5155 Fax: (684) 633-4195 pmgaleai@samoatelco.com</p>
<p>GUAM</p> <p>Director Bureau of Budget and Management Research Office of the Governor P.O. Box 2950 Agana, Guam 96910 Telephone: 011-671-472-2285 Fax: 011-472-2825 jer@ns.gov.gu</p>	<p>PUERTO RICO</p> <p>Jose Caballero / Mayra Silva Puerto Rico Planning Board Federal Proposals Review Office Minillas Government Center P.O. Box 41119 San Juan, Puerto Rico 00940-1119 Telephone: (787) 723-6190 Fax: (787) 722-6783</p>
<p>NORTH MARIANA ISLANDS</p> <p>Ms. Jacoba T. Seman Federal Programs Coordinator Office of Management and Budget Office of the Governor Saipan, MP 96950 Telephone: (670) 664-2289 Fax: (670) 664-2272 omb.jseman@saipan.com</p>	<p>VIRGIN ISLANDS</p> <p>Ira Mills Director, Office of Management and Budget #41 Norre Gade Emancipation Garden Station, Second Floor Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802 Telephone: (340) 774-0750 Fax: (340) 776-0069 irmills@usvi.org</p>

Changes to this list can be made only after OMB is notified by a State's officially designated representative. E-mail messages can be sent to grants@omb.eop.gov. If you prefer, you may send correspondence to the following postal address:

Attn: Grants Management
Office of Management and Budget
New Executive Office Building, Suite 6025
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Please note: Inquiries about obtaining a Federal grant should not be sent to the OMB e-mail or postal address shown above. The best source for this information is the [CFDA](#).

d. Estimated public reporting burden

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is: 1830-0552. Expiration date: 4/30/2008

The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 65 hours (sixty-five hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.)

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651.

If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Deborah Williams, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, 550 12th Street, SW, room 11064, Washington, D.C. 20202-7241.

e. Notice: Necessity of Meeting Deadlines

IMPORTANT NOTICE To Prospective Participants in U.S. Department of Education Contract and Grant Programs

GRANTS

Applicants for grants from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) have to compete for limited funds. Deadlines assure all applicants that they will be treated fairly and equally, without last minute haste. For these reasons, ED must set strict deadlines for grant applications. **Prospective applicants can avoid disappointment if they understand that: failure to meet a deadline will mean that an applicant will be rejected without any consideration whatever.**

The rules, including the deadline, for applying for each grant are published, individually, in the *Federal Register*. A one-year subscription to the Register may be obtained by sending \$340.00 to: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402-9371. (Send check or money order only, no cash or stamps.) The instructions in the *Federal Register* must be followed exactly. **Do not accept any other advice you may receive. No ED employee is authorized to extend any deadline published in the Register.** Questions regarding submission of applications may be addressed to:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Washington, D.C. 20202-4725

CONTRACTS

Competitive procurement actions undertaken by the Department are governed by the Federal Procurement Regulation and implementing ED Procurement Regulation. Generally, prospective competitive procurement actions are synopsized in the Commerce Business Daily (CBD). Prospective offerors are therein advised of the nature of the procurement and where to apply for copies of the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Offerors are advised to be guided solely by the contents of the CBD synopsis and the instructions contained in the RFP. Questions regarding the submission of offers should be addressed to the Contracts Specialist identified on the face page of the RFP. Offers are judged in competition with others, and failure to conform with any substantive requirements of the RFP will result in rejection of the offer without any consideration whatever.

Do not accept any advice you receive that is contrary to instructions contained in either the CBD synopsis or the RFP. No ED employee is authorized to consider a proposal, which is non-responsive to the RFP.

A subscription to the CBD is available for \$208.00 per year via second class mailing or \$261.00 per year via first class mailing. Information included in the Federal Acquisition Regulation is contained in Title 48, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1 (\$49.00). The foregoing publication may be obtained by sending your check or money order only, no cash or stamps, to:

Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402-9371

In an effort to be certain this important information is widely disseminated, this notice is being included in all ED mail to the public. You may therefore, receive more than one notice. If you do, we apologize for any annoyance it may cause you.

5. Non-regulatory Guidance

PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines contain information primarily on:

- The purpose of the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program,
- The local educational agency application process,
- How schools can use the program to create smaller, personalized learning communities and improve student achievement.

The guidance in this document applies to Smaller Learning Communities programs, authorized by section 5441 of Part D of Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7249), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Certain specific requirements explicated in this guidance are taken from the statute or the Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and the Notice of final requirements, priorities, and selection criteria for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and subsequent years funds (*Federal Register* Notices). All such requirements remain binding on grantees. These guidelines impose no additional requirements.

Looking at the SLC program

a. What is the purpose of the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program?

The Smaller Learning Communities program supports the development of small, safe and successful learning environments in large high schools. The goal is to ensure that all students graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to make successful transitions to college and careers.

This program provides competitive grants to local educational agencies (LEAs), or to schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), to develop, implement, or expand smaller learning communities in their large high schools. The Department expects these strategies to:

- improve student achievement;
- increase the number of students mastering State content and performance standards;
- improve student attendance rates, graduation rates, and college enrollment rates;
- reduce the frequency of disciplinary actions; and
- create a safe, drug-free learning environment.

b. Can LEAs that apply under the SLC Special Competition: Enhancing Reading Opportunities in Freshman Academies also apply for the SLC “regular” competition?

Yes, LEAs may apply on behalf of eligible schools in BOTH competitions. We strongly encourage interested and eligible LEAs to apply for the special competition AND this “regular” SLC competition.

c. What other Department programs can be used to support high school improvement?

The Department has a number of programs designed to assist schools with other components of comprehensive reform. Among other things, Department programs can help high schools prepare students to meet challenging academic standards, train teachers in technology, expose students to the world of work, provide students with after-school activities and focus on local school improvement goals. Federal programs that can support some, or all, of these reform efforts include:

- Advanced Placement Programs
- Career and Technical Education
- Comprehensive School Reform
- GEAR UP
- Safe and Drug-Free Schools
- Educational Technology State Grants
- Title I (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged)
- Innovative Programs State Grants
- Tech-Prep Demonstration Program Grants

Pursuant to the statutory application requirements, applications will describe how the applicant will coordinate or use funds provided under this part with other funds provided under this act or other Federal laws. See section 5441(G) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act 20 USC 7249(b)(11).

Eligibility

d. Who is eligible to apply for an SLC grant?

Local educational agencies (LEAs), including schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and educational service agencies, applying on behalf of up to 10 large public high schools, are eligible to apply for an implementation grant.

An educational service agency is only eligible if it can show in its application that the entity or entities with governing authority over the eligible high schools on whose behalf the educational service agency is applying supports the application.

“Large high schools” are schools that include grades 11 and 12 and enroll at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above. Applicants may work independently or in partnership with other public agencies and/or private non-profit organizations. A group of LEAs is also eligible to apply, following procedures specified in 34 CFR 75.127-75.129 of EDGAR. For the purposes of this program, an individual LEA or group application may not request funding for more than ten individually eligible schools. LEAs must include the name(s) of the eligible school(s) and the number of students enrolled in each school. Applicants may provide eligibility data, based upon enrollment during the current school year or the most recently completed school year. We will not accept applications from LEAs applying on behalf of schools that are being constructed and do not have an active student enrollment at the time of application.

e. Are former SLC grantees eligible to apply?

An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the original SLC Program competition held in 2000 (Cohort 1) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in this application package. An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the competition held in 2002 (Cohort 2) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in this application package. LEAs will not be able to apply for funding on behalf of schools that received an SLC implementation grant under the competitions held in 2003 (Cohort 3) and 2004 (Cohort 4).

The first and second cohorts of SLC grantees were not required to undertake a number of the activities that have been required in subsequent competitions, including implementing SLCs “wall-to-wall,” interventions for students who enter high school with reading/language arts or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level, and an external evaluation. Allowing LEAs to apply on behalf of these schools for further funding will enable them to implement activities that were required of schools that were awarded funds in subsequent SLC competitions.

f. How is “large” high school defined?

The Department has defined a large high school as one that: (a) includes grades 11 and 12; and (b) enrolls at least 1,000 students in grades 9 and above.

g. Who may submit the SLC grant application?

An LEA submits grant applications on behalf of one or more eligible high schools. An LEA may submit an application on behalf of:

- one eligible high school in its district,
- a group of eligible high schools that includes no more than ten schools, or
- a group of two or more LEAs, on behalf of up to ten eligible high schools.

If an LEA applies on behalf of more than one school in a single application, each high school in the application must meet the eligibility requirements of this program.

h. What is an “LEA?”

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title IX, Part A, defines “local educational agency” in pertinent part, as a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision. An LEA may be in a city, county, township, school district, or some other political subdivision of a State. An LEA may also be a combination of school districts that are recognized in a State for administering public elementary or secondary schools.

For the full definition of “LEA,” see 20 U.S.C. 8801 (18).

i. May public and private entities other than LEAs participate in this program?

The LEA, as the grantee, is the only authorized fiscal agent. However, applicants may form partnerships with other public or private agencies to plan or implement grant activities. Applicants must document the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of grant activities.

j. Who can serve as the fiscal agent for the grant?

Only the LEA may serve as the fiscal agent for the grant.

k. Is an intermediate unit (e.g., a county office of education) eligible to apply for a grant?

Yes, if the intermediate unit is an LEA, has governing authority over high schools, or meets other eligibility requirements (please refer to question above regarding eligibility)

l. Can charter schools apply?

Yes, public charter schools may apply. Charter schools are generally either LEAs or public schools within an LEA. Charter schools that are both LEAs and meet the definition of a large high school may apply directly. Charter schools that are not LEAs, but meet the definition of a large high school may not apply directly, but may be included in its LEA’s application.

m. Can private schools apply?

No. Under the statute authorizing smaller learning communities, only LEAs are eligible to apply for this grant. There is no provision in the statute for providing services to private school students. However, the Department encourages LEAs to share their knowledge of effective smaller learning communities with private school officials.

n. Can a school propose to use SLC funds to create a single academy even though it cannot serve all students?

No. Applicants are required to propose placing all students in a smaller learning community by the end of the fifth year of implementation.

o. If a school has more than 1,000 students but is housed in two separate campuses, can an LEA apply on its behalf?

Yes. An LEA may apply on behalf of such a school if the district recognizes it as one high school and it meets the other eligibility criteria.

Types of Grants to be Awarded

p. What are the types of grants that will be awarded?

Under the SLC program, the Department will award five-year implementation grants. An LEA may not apply on behalf of the same eligible high school in more than one application. A single LEA may apply for only one implementation grant on behalf of up to 10 schools under this competition.

q. What is the basic purpose of an implementation grant?

The basic purpose of an implementation grant is to provide large high schools the means either to implement a plan to create or expand an already existing SLC program.

r. What are the award ranges for SLC grants?

For an implementation grant, an LEA may receive, on behalf of a single school, \$650,000 to \$1,175,000, depending on the size of the school. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may receive funds up to \$11,750,000 per implementation grant. LEAs must stay within the maximum school allocations when determining their group award request. Under this requirement, LEAs may not request funds for more than 10 schools under a group application. However, an applicant may request an amount lower than the suggested minimum for an individual school or for the overall grant based on the pertinent number of schools. The maximum allocations are for the full 60-month project period.

s. Is there any limit on the amount of funding that an LEA can receive over the life of the program?

No, there is no limit on the amount of funding that an LEA can receive over the life of the program.

t. What must each SLC grant application describe?

As set out in the *Federal Register* Notices governing this competition and application package for this program, all SLC grant applicants must include all required application content as set out in the program statute under 5441(b) of the ESEA.

To apply for SLC funds, an applicant must be prepared either to implement a new smaller learning community program within each targeted high school, or to expand an existing smaller learning community program. Thus, applications for an implementation grant must include a viable implementation plan.

An implementation grant application will describe each school's need for smaller learning communities. It should include a viable implementation plan addressing, at a minimum, each of these points: (a) the structures that the school community has agreed to implement or expand, (b) the steps that were taken to select a program that will meet each school's needs, (c) how the program will work, including the alignment of the goals of the smaller learning communities with the needs of the school, especially as related to staff development, (d) the resources each school and school district will commit, (e) the system for monitoring the progress of the program, and (f) the administrative and managerial relationships among SLCs, the larger school community, and the LEA.

When preparing an implementation grant application, the applicant must include a discussion of how students will be assigned to smaller learning communities, noting that the section within ESEA authorizing the SLC program requires assignment to be at random or by student/parent choice.

u. What kinds of implementation activities can SLC grants support?

The *Federal Register* Notices and application package provide examples of the kinds of activities for which implementation grantees will be able to use SLC grant funds. The Department expects implementation grantees to restructure their large high schools into smaller learning communities. Examples of activities that may be conducted under an implementation grant include:

- implementing and expanding the structures of the smaller learning communities within the designated large high schools,
- implementing and expanding complementary personalization strategies within the designated large high schools,
- providing professional development for school staff as it relates to the needs of the staff and the goals of the smaller learning communities,
- involving parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, local non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, other service organizations, and other community members in the smaller learning communities,
- obtaining the services of outside experts, and
- providing stipends and release time for teachers, administrators, and community members involved in the implementation or expansion of the smaller learning community.

Distribution and Use of Funds

v. What are the authorized activities for which Smaller Learning Communities funds may be used?

According to Section 5441 of Subpart 4 of Part D of Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (USC 7249), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, funds from the Smaller Learning Communities program may be used for one or more of the following:

- a. to study the feasibility of creating the smaller learning community or communities as well as effective and innovative organizational and instructional strategies that will be used in the smaller learning community or communities;

- b. to research, develop and implement strategies for creating the smaller learning community or communities, as well as effective and innovative changes in curriculum and instruction, geared to high State content standards and State student academic achievement standards;
- c. to provide professional development for school staff in innovative teaching methods that challenge and engage students to be used in the smaller learning community or communities; and
- d. to develop and implement strategies to include parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations (including local non-profit, faith-based and other service organizations), and other community members in the smaller learning communities, as facilitators of activities that enable teachers to participate in professional development activities, as well as to provide links between students and their community.

In order to perform the planned activities noted in items (a)-(d), applicants should refer to questions “u” for examples of allowable implementation activities.

w. How should an LEA distribute funds to the school(s) on whose behalf it submitted an SLC grant application?

The Department fully expects the large majority of the funds to be expended at the “school building level,” covering the activities, services and purchases identified in the application as occurring at the school-level.

x. How long are the grant funds available to the LEAs?

Implementation grants will fund activities for up to 60 months.

y. Since funding is available for a five-year period, are there any limits on when the money can be spent?

The Department requires applicants to submit a detailed yearly budget as part of a complete application. Through GAPS, the Department of Education’s Grants and Payments System, the Department will monitor grantees’ spending activities. Grantees whose spending diverges from the plan outlined in their application will be required to explain any discrepancies and risk losing funds as will grantees that are not in compliance with GAPS regulations for drawing down and spending money.

z. What percentage of total grant funds may an LEA set aside to cover its administrative costs?

The statute for the Smaller Learning Communities program does not establish a specific percentage that can be set aside to cover administrative costs. However, in keeping with the applicable cost principles, any set-aside must be “necessary and reasonable” for the proper and efficient administration of the SLC program.

aa. May SLC funds be used to construct or purchase new facilities?

Funds may not be used to construct or purchase facilities (34 CFR 75.553).

Grant funds may be used to:

- complete minor renovations (although grantees will need prior approval from the Department’s SLC program office),
- rent new facilities, and
- purchase equipment on a limited basis (see question “ff” for more information on limited equipment expenditures). Hardware to be purchased for the SLC project that will cost less than \$5,000 per unit, should be included in the “Supplies” category of the proposed budget.

bb. Grant funds can be used to cover “limited equipment” expenditures. What is the definition of “limited purchases?”

Although the Department has not specified an amount or percentage cap on equipment acquisitions with grant funds, applicants should be aware that grants awarded under this program are not to support large purchases of equipment--see the application guidelines. In addition, applicants should not propose spending plans for scheduled replacements or upgrades of equipment. Applicants may make modest equipment acquisitions with grant funds that enable them to establish a core infrastructure that can be used to seek additional and larger levels of equipment support from consortium members or from corporate donors or foundation sponsors.

cc. Can SLC funds be used to purchase computers?

The statute does not prohibit purchase of computers. The Department encourages applicants, however, to limit hardware costs because the intent of the program is to create or expand smaller, personalized learning environments for students. The Department encourages applicants to look to other funding sources to support technology needs.

dd. Can SLC funds be used to hire teachers?

The SLC program is designed to help large high schools create or expand smaller, more personalized communities. The Department anticipates that many schools will find that their staffing needs change as they create smaller learning communities. Nevertheless, the Department encourages schools to avoid relying on temporary SLC funds to meet staffing needs.

Implementation grant applications must demonstrate the ability to sustain proposed SLCs at the end of the grant period (see “Quality of Project Design” in the selection criteria). LEAs relying on SLC funds to pay teacher salaries seem unlikely to meet this goal.

ee. May a grantee use SLC funds to reimburse a proposal-writing firm or a consultant for developing an application?

No. A grantee may not use SLC grant funds to cover the cost of proposal development. SLC funds may only be used for costs that are necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient performance and administration of the SLC project.

ff. If a grantee had already begun plans for developing or implementing small school structures, may SLC funds be used to reimburse the grantee for costs that were incurred prior to the date it was notified that it would receive SLC funds?

Yes. As authorized in EDGAR Part 74.25, recipients may use award funds to reimburse for pre-award costs incurred 90 calendar days prior to award. All pre-award costs are incurred at the recipient's risk.

gg. How does the Department expect grantees to continue implementing smaller learning communities once SLC funds have expired?

The Department recognizes that there are costs associated with restructuring schools into smaller learning communities. Therefore, Smaller Learning Communities funds are start-up funds that allow schools to create or expand smaller learning communities. Schools are required to determine how they will sustain smaller learning communities beyond the life of their grants. The Department expects that schools will use funds provided under the ESEA, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, or other Federal programs, as well as local, State, and private funds sufficient to ensure continuation of efforts after Federal support ends.

Data Collection

hh. What types of evaluation activities will be expected of grantees?

Recipients of implementation grants will be required to support an evaluation of the project that will provide information to the project director and school personnel that will be useful in gauging their progress and in identifying areas for improvement. Each evaluation must include an annual report for each of the first four years of the project period and a final report that will be completed at the end of the fifth year of implementation that will include information on the implementation during the fifth year as well as information on the implementation of the project across the entire project period. We require that grantees submit each of these reports to the Department.

In addition, we require that the evaluation be conducted by an independent third party whose role in the project is limited to conducting the evaluation.

ii. What types of data will grantees be required to collect and submit annually?

We require applicants to identify in their application specific performance indicators and annual performance objectives for each of these indicators. Specifically, we require applicants to use the following performance indicators to measure the progress of each school:

1. The percentage of students who scored at the proficient and advanced levels on the reading/language arts and mathematics assessments used by the State to determine whether a school has made adequate yearly progress under Part A of Title I of ESEA, as well as these percentages disaggregated by subject matter and the following subgroups:

- a. Major racial and ethnic groups;
- b. Students with disabilities;
- c. Students with limited English proficiency; and
- d. Economically disadvantaged students.

2. The school's graduation rate, as defined in the State's approved accountability plan for Part A of Title I of ESEA;

3. The percentage of graduates who enroll in postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training for the semester following graduation; and

4. The percentage of graduates who are employed by the end of the first quarter after they graduate (e.g., for students who graduate in May or June, this would be September 30).

Other appropriate indicators the LEA may choose to identify in its application, such as rates of average daily attendance and year-to-year retention; achievement and gains in English proficiency of limited English proficient students; the incidence of school violence, drug and alcohol use, and disciplinary actions; or the percentage of students completing advanced placement courses, and the rate of passing advanced placement tests (such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate) and courses for college credit.

Applicants are required to include in their applications baseline data for each of these indicators and identify performance objectives for each year of the project period. We further require recipients of grants report annually on the extent to which each school achieves its performance objectives for each indicator during the preceding school year. We require grantees to include in these reports comparable data, if available, for the preceding three school years so that trends in performance will be more apparent.

jj. How can I obtain a DUNS number?

If you are currently participating in Department of Education programs, the Department has already obtained a DUNS number for all grantees and payees. If you did not receive the DUNS number in the mail, they can be obtained at no charge by calling 1-800-333-0505, or by completing the DUNS Number Request Form that is accessible via the Internet at <http://www.dnb.com/aboutdb/dunsform.htm>.

6. Supporting Documents

a. Federal Legislation: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Title V, Part D

SEC. 5441. SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES.

(a) GRANT AUTHORITY- The Secretary is authorized to award grants to local educational agencies to enable the agencies to create a smaller learning community or communities.

(b) APPLICATION- Each local educational agency desiring a grant under this subpart shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require. The application shall include descriptions of the following:

- (1) Strategies and methods the local educational agency will use to create the smaller learning community or communities.
- (2) Curriculum and instructional practices, including any particular themes or emphases, to be used in the smaller learning environment.
- (3) The extent of involvement of teachers and other school personnel in investigating, designing, implementing, and sustaining the smaller learning community or communities.
- (4) The process to be used for involving students, parents, and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of the smaller learning community or communities.
- (5) Any cooperation or collaboration among community agencies, organizations, businesses, and others to develop or implement a plan to create the smaller learning community or communities.
- (6) The training and professional development activities that will be offered to teachers and others involved in the activities assisted under this subpart.
- (7) The objectives of the activities assisted under this subpart, including a description of how such activities will better enable all students to reach challenging State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.
- (8) The methods by which the local educational agency will assess progress in meeting the objectives described in paragraph (7).
- (9) If the smaller learning community or communities exist as a school-within-a-school, the relationship, including governance and administration, of the smaller learning community to the remainder of the school.
- (10) The administrative and managerial relationship between the local educational agency and the smaller learning community or communities, including how such agency will demonstrate a commitment to the continuity of the smaller learning community or communities (including the continuity of student and teacher assignment to a particular learning community).
- (11) How the local educational agency will coordinate or use funds provided under this subpart with other funds provided under this Act or other Federal laws.
- (12) The grade levels or ages of students who will participate in the smaller learning community or communities.
- (13) The method of placing students in the smaller learning community or communities, such that students are not placed according to ability or any other measure, but are placed at random or by their own choice, and not pursuant to testing or other judgments.

(c) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES- Funds under this section may be used for one or more of the following:

(1) To study—

(A) the feasibility of creating the smaller learning community or communities; and

(B) effective and innovative organizational and instructional strategies that will be used in the smaller learning community or communities.

(2) To research, develop, and implement—

(A) strategies for creating the smaller learning community or communities; and

(B) strategies for effective and innovative changes in curriculum and instruction, geared to challenging State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards.

(3) To provide professional development for school staff in innovative teaching methods that—

(A) challenge and engage students; and

(B) will be used in the smaller learning community or communities.

(4) To develop and implement strategies to include parents, business representatives, local institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, and other community members in the smaller learning communities as facilitators of activities that enable teachers to participate in professional development activities and provide links between students and their community.

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7. Required Forms and Assurances

Note: Copies of the standard forms shown from this page forward are available at the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

1. Application for Federal Assistance (ED Form 424)
2. SLC program grant application coversheet
3. Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)
4. General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427
5. Assurances: Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
6. Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (ED 80-0013)
7. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier Covered Transactions (ED 80-0014)
8. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Form LLL)
9. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity

a. Application Cover Page (ED 424)

Application for Federal U.S.
Education Assistance (ED 424)



Department of Education

Form Approved
OMB No. 1890-0017
Exp. OMB Approved

Applicant Information

1. Name and Address

Legal Name: _____

Address: _____

Organizational Unit

Code + 4

City

State

County

ZIP

2. Applicant's D-U-N-S Number | | | | | | | | | |

6. Novice Applicant ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Applicant's T-I-N | | | | - | | | | | | | | | |
debt? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Is the applicant delinquent on any Federal

(If "Yes," attach an explanation.)

4. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance #: 84. | | | | | | | |

Title: _____
the box.) | | | |

8. Type of Applicant (Enter appropriate letter in

5. Project Director: _____

Address: _____

City State Zip code + 4
Tel. #: () - Fax #: () -

E-Mail Address: _____

A - State F - Independent School District
B - Local G - Public College or University
C - Special District H - Private, Non-profit College or University
D - Indian Tribe I - Non-profit Organization
E - Individual J - Private, Profit-Making Organization

K - Other (Specify): _____

9. State Application Identifier

Application Information

10. Type of Submission:

subjects planned at

-PreApplication

-Application

Construction

Construction

14.)

Non-Construction

Non-Construction

designated to be

11. Is application subject to review by Executive Order 12372 process?

☐ Yes (Date made available to the Executive Order 12372

process for review): ____/____/____

13. Are any research activities involving human

any time during the proposed project period?

☐ Yes (Go to 13a.) ☐ No (Go to item

13a. Are all the research activities proposed

exempt from the regulations?

☐ Yes (Provide Exemption(s) #):

☐ No (Provide Assurance #):

___ No (If "No," check appropriate box below.)
___ Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.
___ Program has not been selected by State for review.

14. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

12. Proposed Project Dates: ____/____/____
Start Date: End Date:

Estimated Funding

Authorized Representative Information

16. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all data in this

preapplication/application are true

15a. Federal \$ _____.00 and correct. The document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant

b. Applicant \$ _____.00 and the applicant will comply with the attached assurances if the assistance is awarded.

c. State \$ _____.00 a. Authorized Representative (Please type or print name clearly.)

d. Local \$ _____.00

e. Other \$ _____.00 b. Title:

f. Program Income \$ _____.00 c. Tel. #: () ____ - ____ Fax #: () ____ - ____

d. E-Mail Address:

g. TOTAL \$ _____.00 e. Signature of Authorized Representative

Date: ____/____/____

Instructions for Form ED 424

1. **Legal Name and Address.** Enter the legal name of applicant and the name of the primary organizational unit which will undertake the assistance activity.
2. **D-U-N-S Number.** Enter the applicant's D-U-N-S Number. If your organization does not have a D-U-N-S Number, you can obtain the number by calling 1-800-333-0505 or by completing a D-U-N-S Number Request Form. The form can be obtained via the Internet at the following URL: <http://www.dnb.com>.
3. **Tax Identification Number.** Enter the taxpayer's identification number as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service.
4. **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number.** Enter the CFDA number and title of the program under which assistance is requested. The CFDA number can be found in the federal register notice and the application package.
5. **Project Director.** Name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application.
6. **Novice Applicant.** Check "Yes" or "No" only if assistance is being requested under a program that gives special consideration to novice applicants. Otherwise, **leave blank**.

Check "Yes" if you meet the requirements for novice applicants specified in the regulations in 34 CFR 75.225 and included on the attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424." By checking "Yes" the applicant certifies that it meets these novice applicant requirements. Check "No" if you do not meet the requirements for novice applicants.
7. **Federal Debt Delinquency.** Check "Yes" if the applicant's organization is delinquent on any Federal debt. (This question refers to the applicant's organization and not to the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of debt include delinquent audit disallowances, loans and taxes.) Otherwise, check "No."
8. **Type of Applicant.** Enter the appropriate letter in the box provided.
9. **State Application Identifier.** State use only (if applicable).
10. **Type of Submission.** See "Definitions for Form ED 424" attached.
11. **Executive Order 12372.** See "Definitions for Form ED 424" attached. Check "Yes" if the application is subject to review by E.O. 12372. Also, please enter the month, day, and four (4) digit year (mm/dd/yyyy). Otherwise, check "No."
12. **Proposed Project Dates.** Please enter the month, day, and four (4) digit year (mm/dd/yyyy).

13. **Human Subjects Research.** (See I.A. "Definitions" in attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424.")

If Not Human Subjects Research. Check "No" if research activities involving human subjects are not planned at any time during the proposed project period. The remaining parts of Item 12 are then not applicable.

If Human Subjects Research. Check "Yes" if research activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project period, either at the applicant organization or at any other performance site or collaborating institution. Check "Yes" even if the research is exempt from the regulations for the protection of human subjects. (See I.B. "Exemptions" in attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424.")

- 13a. **If Human Subjects Research is Exempt from the Human Subjects Regulations.** Check "Yes" if all the research activities proposed are designated to be exempt from the regulations. Insert the exemption number(s) corresponding to one or more of the six exemption categories listed in I.B. "Exemptions." In addition, follow the instructions in II.A. "Exempt Research Narrative" in the attached page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424." Insert this narrative immediately following the ED 424 face page.

- 13a. **If Human Subjects Research is Not Exempt from Human Subjects Regulations.** Check "No" if some or all of the planned research activities are covered (not exempt). In addition, follow the instructions in II.B. "Nonexempt Research Narrative" in the page entitled "Definitions for Form ED 424." Insert this narrative immediately following the ED 424 face page.

- 13a. **Human Subjects Assurance Number.** If the applicant has an approved Federal Wide (FWA) or Multiple Project Assurance (MPA) with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that covers the specific activity, insert the number in the space provided. If the applicant does not have an approved assurance on file with OHRP, enter "None." In this case, the applicant, by signature on the face page, is declaring that it will comply with 34 CFR 97 and proceed to obtain the human subjects assurance upon request by the designated ED official. If the application is recommended/selected for funding, the designated ED official will request that the applicant obtain the assurance within 30 days after the specific formal request.

Note about Institutional Review Board Approval. ED does not require certification of Institutional Review Board approval with the application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is recommended/selected for funding, the designated ED official will request that the applicant obtain and send the certification to ED within 30 days after the formal request.

- 14. Project Title.** Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. If more than one program is involved, you should append an explanation on a separate sheet. If appropriate (e.g., construction or real property projects), attach a map showing project location. For preapplications, use a separate sheet to provide a summary description of this project.
- 15. Estimated Funding.** Amount requested or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines as applicable. If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, indicate **only** the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses. If both basic and supplemental amounts are included, show breakdown on an attached sheet. For multiple program funding, use totals and show breakdown using same categories as item 15.
- 16. Certification.** To be signed by the authorized representative of the applicant. A copy of the governing body's authorization for you to sign this application as official representative must be on file in the applicant's office. Be sure to enter the telephone and fax number and e-mail address of the authorized representative. Also, in item 15e, please enter the month, day, and four (4) digit year (mm/dd/yyyy) in the date signed field.

Paperwork Burden Statement. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1875-0106. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average between 15 and 45 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4700. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form write directly to:** Joyce I. Mays, Application Control Center, U.S. Department of Education, Potomac Center Plaza, 550 12th Street SW, Room 7076, Washington, DC 20202-4260

Definitions for Form ED 424

Novice Applicant (See 34 CFR 75.225). For discretionary grant programs under which the Secretary gives special consideration to novice applications, a novice applicant means any applicant for a grant from ED that—

- Has never received a grant or subgrant under the program from which it seeks funding;
- Has never been a member of a group application, submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, that received a grant under the program from which it seeks funding; and
- Has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal government in the five years before the deadline date for applications under the program. For the purposes of this requirement, a grant is active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds.

In the case of a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, a group includes only parties that meet the requirements listed above.

Type of Submission. "Construction" includes construction of new buildings and acquisition, expansion, remodeling, and alteration of existing buildings, and initial equipment of any such buildings, or any combination of such activities (including architects' fees and the cost of acquisition of land). "Construction" also includes remodeling to meet standards, remodeling designed to conserve energy, renovation or remodeling to accommodate new technologies, and the purchase of existing historic buildings for conversion to public libraries. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "equipment" includes machinery, utilities, and built-in equipment and any necessary enclosures or structures to house them; and such term includes all other items necessary for the functioning of a particular facility as a facility for the provision of library services.

Executive Order 12372. The purpose of Executive Order 12372 is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The application notice, as published in the Federal Register, informs the applicant as to whether the program is subject to the requirements of E.O. 12372. In addition, the application package contains information on the State Single Point of Contact. An applicant is still eligible to apply for a grant or grants even if its respective State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc. does not have a State Single Point of Contact. For additional information on E.O. 12372 go to http://12.46.245.173/pls/portal30/catalog.REQ_FOR_12372.show

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH

I. Definitions and Exemptions

A. Definitions.

A research activity involves human subjects if the activity is research, as defined in the Department's regulations, and the research activity will involve use of human subjects, as defined in the regulations.

—Research

The ED Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 97, define research as "a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge." *If an activity follows a deliberate plan whose purpose is to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge it is research.* Activities which meet this definition constitute research whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

—Human Subject

The regulations define human subject as "a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information." *(1) If an activity involves obtaining information about a living person by manipulating that person or that person's environment, as might occur when a new instructional technique is tested, or by communicating or interacting with the individual, as occurs with surveys and interviews, the definition of human subject is met. (2) If an activity involves obtaining private information about a living person in such a way that the information can be linked to that individual (the identity of the subject is or may be readily determined by the investigator or associated with the information), the definition of human subject is met.* [Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a school health record).]

B. Exemptions.

Research activities in which the **only** involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following six categories of **exemptions** are not covered by the regulations:

(1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (b) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b)

any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. *If the subjects are children, exemption 2 applies only to research involving educational tests and observations of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed. Exemption 2 does not apply if children are surveyed or interviewed or if the research involves observation of public behavior and the investigator(s) participate in the activities being observed.* [Children are defined as persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures involved in the research, under the applicable law or jurisdiction in which the research will be conducted.]

(3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under section (2) above, if the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

(4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

(5) Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (a) public benefit or service programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (c) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.

(6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

II. Instructions for Exempt and Nonexempt Human Subjects Research Narratives

If the applicant marked "Yes" for Item 13 on the ED 424, the applicant must provide a human subjects "exempt research" or "nonexempt research" narrative and insert it immediately following the ED 424 face page.

A. Exempt Research Narrative.

If you marked "Yes" for item 13 a. and designated exemption numbers(s), provide the "exempt research" narrative. The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination by ED that

the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The narrative must be succinct.

B. Nonexempt Research Narrative.

If you marked "No" for item 13 a. you must provide the "nonexempt research" narrative. The narrative must address the following seven points. Although no specific page limitation applies to this section of the application, be succinct.

(1) **Human Subjects Involvement and Characteristics:** Provide a detailed description of the proposed involvement of human subjects. Describe the characteristics of the subject population, including their anticipated number, age range, and health status. Identify the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of any subpopulation. Explain the rationale for the involvement of special classes of subjects, such as children, children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, persons with mental disabilities, pregnant women, prisoners, institutionalized individuals, or others who are likely to be vulnerable

(2) **Sources of Materials:** Identify the sources of research material obtained from individually identifiable living human subjects in the form of specimens, records, or data. Indicate whether the material or data will be obtained specifically for research purposes or whether use will be made of existing specimens, records, or data.

(3) **Recruitment and Informed Consent:** Describe plans for the recruitment of subjects and the consent procedures to be followed. Include the circumstances under which consent will be sought and obtained, who will seek it, the nature of the information to be provided to prospective subjects, and the method of documenting consent. State if the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has authorized a modification or waiver of the elements of consent or the requirement for documentation of consent.

(4) **Potential Risks:** Describe potential risks (physical, psychological, social, legal, or other) and assess their likelihood and seriousness. Where appropriate, describe alternative treatments and procedures that might be advantageous to the subjects.

(5) **Protection Against Risk:** Describe the procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks, including risks to confidentiality, and assess their likely effectiveness. Where appropriate, discuss provisions for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to the subjects. Also, where appropriate, describe the provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.

(6) **Importance of the Knowledge to be Gained:** Discuss the importance of the knowledge gained or to be gained as a result of the proposed research. Discuss why the risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits to subjects and in relation to the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result.

(7) **Collaborating Site(s):** If research involving human subjects will take place at collaborating site(s) or other performance site(s), name the sites and briefly describe their involvement or role in the research.

Copies of the Department of Education's Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects, 34 CFR Part 97 and other pertinent materials on the protection of human subjects in research are available from the Grants Policy and Oversight Staff, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4250, telephone: (202) 245-6120, and on the U.S. Department of Education's Protection of Human Subjects in Research Web Site at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>

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b. SLC Program Grant Application Coversheet

Coversheet

**Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) Program
Grant Application Package**

1. LEA Name and Address:

NCES District ID (for help, please see <http://www.nces.ed.gov/globallocator>):

2. Name and Address of Each School Named in the SLC Application:

Name	Address	No. of students enrolled
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

c. Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs (ED 524)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004
Expiration Date: 10-31-2007

Name of Institution/Organization

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY : U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs*						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)						

***Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- (2) If yes, please provide the following information:
Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: ___/___/___ To: ___/___/___ (mm/dd/yyyy)
Approving Federal agency: ☐ ED ☐ Other (please specify): _____
- (3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:
☐ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or ☐ Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)?

Name of Institution/Organization		Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.				
SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY NON-FEDERAL FUNDS						
Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel						
2. Fringe Benefits						
3. Travel						
4. Equipment						
5. Supplies						
6. Contractual						
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (Lines 1-8)						
10. Indirect Costs						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (Lines 9-11)						

SECTION C – BUDGET NARRATIVE (see instructions)

Instructions for ED 524

General Instructions

This form is used to apply to individual U.S. Department of Education (ED) discretionary grant programs. Unless directed otherwise, provide the same budget information for each year of the multi-year funding request. Pay attention to applicable program specific instructions, if attached. Please consult with your Business Office prior to submitting this form.

Section A - Budget Summary U.S. Department of Education Funds

All applicants must complete Section A and provide a breakdown by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-11.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e): For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f): Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If funding is requested for only one project year, leave this column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e): Show the total budget request for each project year for which funding is requested.

Line 12, column (f): Show the total amount requested for all project years. If funding is requested for only one year, leave this space blank.

Indirect Cost Information:

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, this information is to be completed by your Business Office. (1): Indicate whether or not your organization has an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement that was a

pproved by the Federal government. (2): If you checked “yes” in (1), indicate in (2) the beginning and ending dates covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. In addition, indicate whether ED or another Federal agency (Other) issued the approved agreement. If you check “Other,” specify the name of the Federal agency that issued the approved agreement. (3): If you are applying for a grant under a Restricted Rate Program (34 CFR 75.563 or 76.563), indicate whether you are using a restricted indirect cost rate that is included on your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or whether you are using a restricted indirect cost rate that complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2). Note: State or Local government agencies may not use the provision for a restricted indirect cost rate specified in 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2). Check only one response. Leave blank, if this item is not applicable.

Section B - Budget Summary Non-Federal Funds

If you are required to provide or volunteer to provide matching funds or other non-Federal resources to the project, these should be shown for each applicable budget category on lines 1-11 of Section B.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e): For each project year, for which matching funds or other contributions are provided, show the total contribution for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f): Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e): Show the total matching or other contribution for each project year.

Line 12, column (f): Show the total amount to be contributed for all years of the multi-year project. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this space blank.

Section C - Budget Narrative [Attach separate sheet(s)] Pay attention to applicable program specific instructions, if attached.

1. Provide an itemized budget breakdown, and justification by project year, for each budget category listed in Sections A and B. For grant projects that will be divided into two or more separately budgeted major activities or sub-projects, show for each budget category of a project year the breakdown of the specific expenses attributable to each sub-project or activity.
2. If applicable to this program, provide the rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated.
3. If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, this information is to be completed by your Business Office. Specify the estimated amount of the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied and the total indirect expense. Depending on the grant program to which you are applying and/or your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, some direct cost budget categories in your grant application budget may not be included in the base and multiplied by your indirect cost rate. For example, you must multiply the indirect cost rates of “Training grants” (34 CFR 75.562) and grants under programs with “Supplement not Supplant” requirements (“Restricted

Rate” programs) by a “modified total direct cost” (MTDC) base (34 CFR 75.563 or 76.563). Please indicate which costs are included and which costs are excluded from the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied.

When calculating indirect costs (line 10) for “Training grants” or grants under “Restricted Rate” programs, you must refer to the information and examples on ED’s website at: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

You may also contact (202) 377-3838 for additional information regarding calculating indirect cost rates or general indirect cost rate information.

4. Provide other explanations or comments you deem necessary.

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1890-0004**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to vary from 13 to 22 hours per response, with an average of 17.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to (insert program office), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

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**d. Notice: General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427:
Equitable Access and Participation**

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1890-0007**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** Director, Grants Policy and Oversight Staff, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-4250.

e. Assurances: Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

Note: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§ 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§ 290 dd-3 and 290 ee 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project

purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.

8. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.
9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §§874) and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§ 327-333), regarding labor standards for federally assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clear Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clear Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, (P.L. 93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the

Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, (P.L. 93-205).

12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1721 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead- based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this program.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL		TITLE
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION		DATE SUBMITTED

Standard Form 424B (Rev. 7-97) Back

f. Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (ED 80-0013)

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Applicants must review the requirements for certification regarding lobbying included in the regulations cited below before completing this form. Applicants must sign this form to comply with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." This certification is a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Education relies when it makes a grant or enters into a cooperative agreement.

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

(a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;

(b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;

(c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants and contracts under grants and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certification.

NAME OF APPLICANT	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND / OR PROJECT NAME
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
SIGNATURE	DATE

**g. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and
Voluntary Exclusion — Lower Tier Covered Transactions (ED 80-0014)**

**Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and
Voluntary Exclusion -- Lower Tier Covered Transactions**

This certification is required by the Department of Education regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 34 CFR Part 85, for all lower tier transactions meeting the threshold and tier requirements stated at Section 85.110.

Instructions for Certification

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.

2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.

4. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "lower tier covered transaction," "participant," "person," "primary covered transaction," "principal," "proposal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.

5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.

6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the clause titled ☐ Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions, ☐ without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.

7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may but is not required to, check the Nonprocurement List.

8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

Certification

- (1) The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.
- (2) Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

NAME OF APPLICANT	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND/OR PROJECT NAME
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	
SIGNATURE	DATE

ED 80-0014, 9/90 (Replaces GCS-009 (REV.12/88), which is obsolete)

h. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Form LLL)

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352
(See reverse for public burden disclosure)

1. Type of Federal Action: a. contract _____ b. grant c. cooperative agreement d. loan e. loan guarantee f. loan insurance	2. Status of Federal Action: a. bid/offer/application _____ b. initial award c. post-award	3. Report Type: a. initial filing _____ b. material change For material change only: Year _____ quarter _____ Date of last report _____
4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity: _____ Prime _____ Subawardee Tier _____, if Known: Congressional District, if known:	5. If Reporting Entity in No. 4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime: Congressional District, if known:	
6. Federal Department/Agency:	7. Federal Program Name/Description: CFDA Number, if applicable: _____	
7. Federal Action Number, if known:	9. Award Amount, if known: \$	
10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant <i>(if individual, last name, first name, MI):</i>	b. Individuals Performing Services <i>(including address if different from No. 10a)</i> <i>(last name, first name, MI):</i>	
11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when this transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.	Signature: _____ Print Name: _____ Title: _____ Telephone No.: _____ Date: _____	
Federal Use Only	Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF SF-LLL, DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

This disclosure form shall be completed by the reporting entity, whether subawardee or prime Federal recipient, at the initiation or receipt of a covered Federal action, or a material change to a previous filing, pursuant to title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. The filing of a form is required for each payment or agreement to make payment to any lobbying entity for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a covered Federal action. Complete all items that apply for both the initial filing and material change report. Refer to the implementing guidance published by the Office of Management and Budget for additional information.

1. Identify the type of covered Federal action for which lobbying activity is and/or has been secured to influence the outcome of a covered Federal action.
2. Identify the status of the covered Federal action.
3. Identify the appropriate classification of this report. If this is a followup report caused by a material change to the information previously reported, enter the year and quarter in which the change occurred. Enter the date of the last previously submitted report by this reporting entity for this covered Federal action.
4. Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the reporting entity. Include Congressional District, if known. Check the appropriate classification of the reporting entity that designates if it is, or expects to be, a prime or subaward recipient. Identify the tier of the subawardee, e.g., the first subawardee of the prime is the 1st tier. Subawards include but are not limited to subcontracts, subgrants and contract awards under grants.
5. If the organization filing the report in item 4 checks "Subawardee," then enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the prime Federal recipient. Include Congressional District, if known.
6. Enter the name of the federal agency making the award or loan commitment. Include at least one organizational level below agency name, if known. For example, Department of Transportation, United States Coast Guard.
7. Enter the Federal program name or description for the covered Federal action (item 1). If known, enter the full Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and loan commitments.
8. Enter the most appropriate Federal identifying number available for the Federal action identified in item 1 (e.g., Request for Proposal (RFP) number; Invitations for Bid (IFB) number; grant announcement number; the contract, grant, or loan award number; the application/proposal control number assigned by the Federal agency). Included prefixes, e.g., "RFP-DE-90-001."
9. For a covered Federal action where there has been an award or loan commitment by the Federal agency, enter the Federal amount of the award/loan commitment for the prime entity identified in item 4 or 5.
10. (a) Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the lobbying registrant under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 engaged by the reporting entity identified in item 4 to influence the covered Federal action.
(b) Enter the full names of the individual(s) performing services, and include full address if different from 10(a). Enter Last Name, First Name, and Middle Initial (MI).
11. The certifying official shall sign and date the form, print his/her name, title, and telephone number.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is OMB No. 0348-0046. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0046), Washington, DC 20503



Survey on Ensuring Equal
Opportunity
FOR APPLICANTS

Do not enter information below unless instructed to do so.

OMB No. 1890-0014 Exp. 1/31/2006

Purpose: This form is for applicants that are nonprofit private organizations (not including private universities). Please complete it to assist the Federal government in ensuring that all qualified applicants, small or large, non-religious or faith-based, have an equal opportunity to compete for Federal funding. Information provided on this form will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions and will not be included in the Federal grants database.

Instructions for Submitting Survey

If submitting hard copy, please place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it with your application package.

If submitting electronically, please include the PR Award Number assigned to your e-application in the box above entitled "*Do not enter information below unless instructed to do so.*" Place and seal the completed survey in an envelope and mail it to: Joyce I. Mays, Application Control Center, U.S. Department of Education, 7th and D Streets, SW, ROB-3, Room 3671, Washington, DC 20202-4725.

1. Does the applicant have 501(c)(3) status?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. How many full-time equivalent employees does the applicant have? (*Check only one box*).

☐ 3 or Fewer ☐ 15-50
☐ 4-5 ☐ 51-100
☐ 6-14 ☐ over 100

3. What is the size of the applicant's annual budget? (*Check only one box.*)

☐ Less Than \$150,000
☐ \$150,000 - \$299,999
☐ \$300,000 - \$499,999
☐ \$500,000 - \$999,999
☐ \$1,000,000 - \$4,999,999
☐ \$5,000,000 or more

4. Is the applicant a faith-based/religious organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Is the applicant a non-religious community-based organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Is the applicant an intermediary that will manage the grant on behalf of other organizations?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Has the applicant ever received a government grant or contract (Federal, State, or local)?

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Is the applicant a local affiliate of a national organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Survey Instructions on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicant

1. 501(c)(3) status is a legal designation provided on application to the Internal Revenue Service by eligible organizations. Some grant programs may require nonprofit applicants to have 501(c)(3) status. Other grant programs do not.
2. For example, two part-time employees who each work half-time equal one full-time equivalent employee. If the applicant is a local affiliate of a national organization, the responses to survey questions 2 and 3 should reflect the staff and budget size of the local affiliate.
3. Annual budget means the amount of money your organization spends each year on all of its activities.
4. Self-identify.
5. An organization is considered a community-based organization if its headquarters/service location shares the same zip code as the clients you serve.
6. An “intermediary” is an organization that enables a group of small organizations to receive and manage government funds by administering the grant on their behalf.
7. Self-explanatory.
8. Self-explanatory

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1890-0014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average five (5) minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:** Joyce I. Mays, Application Control Center, U.S. Department of Education, 7th and D Streets, SW, ROB-3, Room 3671, Washington, DC 20202-4725.

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a. Appendix A- Report Card Requirement (Implementation Grant Applications only)

Applicants for **Implementation Grants** are required to submit their most recent School Report Card as Appendix A of their application. Applicants who do not include a copy of their report card will be declared ineligible and their proposals will not be read.

b. Appendix B- Baseline Data

Please include Baseline Data as Appendix B.

c. Appendix c- Definitions and terms

(1) Definitions in EDGAR – Definitions defined in 34 CFR 77.1 are applicable to this program.

(2) Other definitions – The following definitions also apply to this program:

BIA schools are Bureau of Indian Affairs-funded schools, as defined by section 1139(3) of the Education Amendments of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 2019(3)).

A group of schools is two or more schools that each meet the definition of a large high school.

A large high school is an entity that includes grades 11 and 12 and has an enrollment of 1,000 or more students in grades 9 and above.

Magnet School means a public school or education center that offers a special curriculum capable of attracting substantial numbers of students of different racial backgrounds.

(3) Terms - The following terms are used in this notice:

Flexible or Block Scheduling is a means of reconfiguring the school day. For example, block courses may be scheduled for two or more continuous class periods or days to allow students greater time for laboratory or project-centered work, field trips or work-based learning, and special assemblies or speakers.

Career Academies are typically schools-within-a school that offer students academic programs organized around broad career themes. Often integrating classroom instruction with work-based learning, academies try to equip students with the necessary skills for both workforce entry and postsecondary education.

Career Clusters generally refer to groupings formed around broad-based industry areas and address all types of skills, ranging from entry-level to advanced practice. A cluster represents those industries or career areas that have a high degree of commonality in work functions, knowledge, and/or skills.

Group of schools refers to the number of schools included in a group application. For the purposes of this program, the number of schools included in a single application may not exceed ten (10).

Houses generally are organizational arrangements that assign students and teachers to sub-schools. Students take some or all courses with their house members and from their house teachers. Each house typically has its own student activity program, student government, disciplinary policies, and social activities. Houses may be yearlong (within a grade) or multi-year (combined grades).

Mentoring Programs designate adults to act as advocates for students. Teachers, counselors, and other school staff (as well as community volunteers or employees at work-based learning sites) serve as mentors, working in consultation with classroom teachers, counselors, and related service personnel to help students individually or in small groups, on a regular basis over an extended period of time.

Schools-within-Schools are autonomous programs housed within a larger school building. They are responsible to the district rather than to the host school's principal and are formally authorized by the superintendent and/or board of education. Schools-within-schools have their own culture, program, staff, students, budget, and school space.

Teacher Advisories are similar to mentoring programs. They organize adults to personalize the high school experience and support academic achievement. Some schools and districts establish advisory classes that meet weekly; others schedule students for less formal one-on-one or group time with teachers. Advisory activities may include helping students develop personal learning plans, introducing students to career clusters, helping students select courses, and working with students on postsecondary plans and pre-employment skills.

d. Appendix D- Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2004

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Vocational and Adult Education

Overview Information

Smaller Learning Communities Program

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and subsequent years' funds.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.215L

Dates:

Applications Available: April 28, 2005.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: June 7, 2005.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: August 11, 2005.

Eligible Applicants: Local educational agencies (LEAs), including schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and educational service agencies, applying on behalf of large public high schools, are eligible to apply for a grant.

An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the original SLC program competition held in 2000 (Cohort 1) or the second competition, which was held in 2002 (Cohort 2) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in the notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and subsequent years' funds (NFP), published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. LEAs that received funding on behalf of schools for an SLC implementation grant(s) under the competitions held in 2003 (Cohort 3) and 2004 (Cohort 4) may not apply on behalf of those same schools for a grant in this competition.

Additional eligibility requirements are listed in the Eligibility section of the Application Requirements in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Estimated Available Funds: \$125,269,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$650,000 to \$11,750,000. See also the chart under Section II. Award Information. Additional information regarding awards and budget determination is in the Budget Information for Determination of Award section in the Application Requirements in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Estimated Size of Award: LEAs may receive, on behalf of a single school, up to \$1,175,000, depending upon the size of the school, during the 60-month project period. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools could receive up to \$11,750,000 per grant. To ensure that sufficient funds are available to support SLC activities, LEAs may not include more than 10 schools in a single application for a grant.

The actual size of awards will be based on a number of factors. These factors include the scope, quality, and comprehensiveness of the proposed project and the range of awards indicated in the application.

Maximum Award: Applications that request more funds than the maximum amounts specified for any school or for the total grant will not be read as part of the regular application process. However, if after the Secretary selects applications to be funded, it appears that additional funds remain available, the Secretary may choose to read those additional applications that requested funds exceeding the maximum amounts specified. If the Secretary chooses to fund any of those additional applications, applicants will be required to work with the Department to revise their proposed budgets to fit within the appropriate funding range.

Estimated Number of Awards: 150.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program is to promote academic achievement through the creation or expansion of small, safe, and successful learning

environments in large public high schools to help ensure that all students graduate with the knowledge and skills necessary to make successful transitions to college and careers.

Priority: This competition includes one absolute priority. The priority is from the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Absolute Priority: For this competition, the priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

The priority is:

Absolute Priority: Helping All Students to Succeed in Rigorous Academic Courses.

This priority supports projects to create or expand SLCs that will implement a coherent set of strategies and interventions that are designed to ensure that all students who enter high school with reading/language arts and mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level “catch up” quickly so that, by no later than the end of the 10th grade, they have acquired the reading/language arts and mathematics skills they need to participate successfully in rigorous academic courses that will equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to transition successfully to postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training.

These accelerated learning strategies and interventions must:

- (1) Be grounded in the findings of scientifically based and other rigorous research;
- (2) Include the use of age-appropriate instructional materials and teaching and learning strategies;
- (3) Provide additional instruction and academic support during the regular school day, which may be supplemented by instruction that is provided before or after school, on weekends, and at other times when school is not in session; and
- (4) Provide sustained professional development and ongoing support for teachers and other personnel who are responsible for delivering instruction.

Application Requirements: Additional requirements for all projects funded through this competition are in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

These additional requirements are: Eligibility; School Report Cards; Types of Grants; Consortium Applications and Educational Service Agencies; Budget Information for Determination of Award; Student Placement; Including All Students; Performance Indicators; Evaluation; High-Risk Status and Other Enforcement Mechanisms; Required Meetings Sponsored by the Department; and Previous Grantees.

Definitions: In addition to the definitions in the authorizing statute and 35 CFR 77.1, the definitions in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register, apply.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 7249.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99, and (b) the priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria contained in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Note: The regulations in part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$125,269,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$650,000 to \$11,750,000. The following chart provides the ranges of awards per high school size for 60-month SLC grants:

SLC Grant Award Ranges	
Student Enrollment	Award Ranges Per School
1,000 - 2,000 Students	\$650,000 - \$800,000
2,001 - 3,000 Students	\$650,000 - \$925,000

3,001 – 4,000 Students	\$650,000 - \$1,050,000
4,001 and Up	\$650,000 – \$1,175,000

Additional information regarding awards and budget determination is in the Budget Information for Determination of Award section in the Application Requirements in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Estimated Size of Award: LEAs may receive, on behalf of a single school, up to \$1,175,000, depending upon the size of the school, for the full 60-month project period. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools may receive up to \$11,750,000 per grant. To ensure that sufficient funds are available to support SLC activities, LEAs may not include more than 10 schools in a single application for a grant. The actual size of awards will be based on a number of factors. These factors include the scope, quality, and comprehensiveness of the proposed project and the range of awards indicated in the application.

Maximum Award: Applications that request more funds than the maximum amounts specified for any school or for the total grant will not be read as part of the regular application process. However, if after the Secretary selects applications to be funded, it appears that additional funds remain available, the Secretary may choose to read those additional applications that requested funds exceeding the maximum amounts specified. If the Secretary chooses to fund any of those additional applications, applicants will be required to work with the Department to revise their proposed budgets to fit within the appropriate funding range.

Estimated Number of Awards: 150.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. **Eligible Applicants:** Local educational agencies (LEAs), including schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and educational service agencies, applying on behalf of large public high schools, are eligible to apply for a grant.

An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the original SLC program competition held in 2000 (Cohort 1) or the second competition, which was held in 2002 (Cohort 2) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in this notice. LEAs that received funding on behalf of schools for an SLC implementation grant(s) under the competitions held in 2003 (Cohort 3) and 2004 (Cohort 4) may not apply on behalf of those same schools for a grant in this competition.

Additional eligibility requirements are listed in the Eligibility section of the Application Requirements in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

2. **Cost Sharing or Matching:** This competition does not involve cost sharing or matching.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. **Address to Request Application Package:** Deborah Williams, U.S. Department of Education, OVAE, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Potomac Center Plaza, room 11064, Washington, DC 20202-7241.

Telephone: 202-245-7770 or via Internet: deborah.williams@ed.gov

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

You may also obtain an application package via Internet from the following address:
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/slcp/applicant.html>.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

To be considered for funding, LEAs must identify in their applications the name(s) of the eligible large high school(s) and the number of students enrolled in each school. A large high school is defined as one having grades 11 and 12, with 1,000 or more students enrolled in grades 9 and above. Enrollment figures

must be based upon data from the current school year or data from the most recently completed school year. We will not accept applications from LEAs applying on behalf of schools that are being constructed and do not have an active student enrollment at the time of application. LEAs may apply on behalf of no more than 10 schools. Additional requirements concerning the content of an application are in the NFP for this program, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. These requirements, together with the forms you must submit, also are in the application package for this competition.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: April 28, 2005

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted by mail or hand delivery. For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application by mail or hand delivery, please refer to section IV. 6. Other Submission Requirements in this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: August 11, 2005

4. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted in paper format by mail or hand delivery.

a. Submission of Applications by Mail.

If you submit your application by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service of a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and three copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the applicable following address:

By mail through the U.S. Postal Service:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.215L)
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.

Washington, DC 20202-4260

Or

By mail through a commercial carrier:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center – Stop 4260
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.215L)
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover, MD 20785-1506

Regardless of the address you use, you must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark,
 - (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing
- stamped by the U.S. Postal Service,
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier, or
 - (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark, or

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

b. Submission of Applications by Hand Delivery

If you submit your application by hand delivery, you or a courier service) must deliver the original and three copies of your application, by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.215L)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department:

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and – if not provided by the Department – in Item 4 of the ED 424 the CFDA number – and suffix letter, if any – of the competition under which you are submitting your application.

(2) The Application Control Center will mail a grant application receipt acknowledgment to you. If you do not receive the grant application receipt acknowledgment within 15 days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are in the NFP published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register, and in the application package.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may also notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

Note: Requirements listed in the NFP published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register are material requirements. Failure to comply with any requirement or with any elements of the grantee's application would subject the grantee to administrative action, including but not limited to designation as a "high-risk" grantee, the imposition of special conditions, or termination of the grant. Circumstances that might cause the Department to take such action include, but are not limited to: the grantee showing a decline in student achievement after two years of implementation of the grant; the grantee's failure to make substantial progress in completing the milestones outlined in the management plan included in the application; and the grantee's expenditure of funds in a manner that is inconsistent with the budget as submitted in the application.

3. Reporting: At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. You must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as specified by

the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118. Additional reporting requirements are in the NFP, published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

4. Performance Measures: We require applicants to identify in their application specific performance indicators and annual performance objectives for each of these indicators. Specifically, we require applicants to use the following performance indicators to measure the progress of each school:

(1) The percentage of students who score at the proficient and advanced levels on the reading/language arts and mathematics assessments used by the State to determine whether a school has made adequate yearly progress under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7249), as amended by Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, as well as these percentages disaggregated by subject matter and the following subgroups:

- (A) Major racial and ethnic groups;
- (B) Students with disabilities;
- (C) Students with limited English proficiency; and
- (D) Economically disadvantaged students.

(2) The school's graduation rate, as defined in the State's approved accountability plan for Part A of title I of the ESEA;

(3) The percentage of graduates who enroll in postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training for the semester following graduation;

(4) The percentage of graduates who are employed by the end of the first quarter after they graduate (e.g., for students who graduate in May or June, this would be September 30);

(5) Other appropriate indicators the LEA may choose to identify in its application, such as rates of average daily attendance and year-to-year retention; achievement and gains in English proficiency of limited English proficient students; the incidence of school violence, drug and alcohol use, and disciplinary actions; or the percentage of students completing advanced placement courses and the rate of passing advanced placement tests (such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate) and courses for college credit.

Applicants are required to include in their applications baseline data for each of these indicators and identify performance objectives for each year of the project period. We further require recipients of grants to report annually on the extent to which each school achieves its performance objectives for each indicator during the preceding school year. We require grantees to include in these reports comparable data, if available, for the preceding three school years so that trends in performance will be more apparent.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Deborah Williams, U.S. Department of Education, OVAE, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center Plaza, room 11064, Washington, DC 20202-7241. Telephone: 202-245-7770 or via Internet: deborah.williams@ed.gov

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed in this section.

VIII. Other Information

Electronic Access to This Document: You may view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: www.ed.gov/news/fedregister

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html

Dated: April 22, 2005

Susan Sclafani,
Assistant Secretary for
Vocational and Adult
Education.

e Appendix E Notice of final requirements, priorities, and selection criteria for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and subsequent years funds

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Smaller Learning Communities Program

AGENCY: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and subsequent years' funds.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education announces a priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria under the Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program. The Assistant Secretary will use this priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for a competition using fiscal year (FY) 2004 funds and may use them in later years.

We intend the priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria to further the purpose of the SLC program, which is to promote academic achievement through the creation or expansion of small, safe, and successful learning environments in large public high schools.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria are effective May 31, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Deborah Williams, U.S. Department of Education, OVAE, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Potomac Center Plaza, room 11064, Washington, DC 20202-7241.

Telephone: 202-245-7770 or via Internet: deborah.williams@ed.gov

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Smaller Learning Communities program is authorized under Title V, Part D, subpart 4 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7249), as amended by Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (ESEA).

A strategy that may hold promise for improving the academic performance of our Nation's young people is the establishment of smaller learning communities as components of comprehensive high school improvement plans. The problems of large high schools and the related question of optimal school size have been debated for the last 40 years and are of growing interest today.

While the research on school size to date has been largely nonexperimental, some evidence suggests that smaller schools may have advantages over larger schools. Research suggests that the positive outcomes associated with smaller schools stem from the schools' ability to create close, personal environments in which teachers can work collaboratively, with each other and with a small set of students, to challenge students and support learning. A variety of structures and operational strategies are thought to provide important supports for smaller learning environments; some data suggest that these approaches offer substantial advantages to both teachers and students (Ziegler 1993; Carroll 1994).

Structural changes for recasting large schools as a set of smaller learning communities (SLCs) are described in the Conference Report for the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2000 (Pub. L. 106-113, H.R. Conference Report No. 106-479, at 1240 (1999)). Such methods include establishing small learning clusters, "houses," career academies, magnet programs, and schools-within-a-school. Other activities may include freshman transition activities, advisory and adult advocate systems, academic teaming, multi-year groupings, "extra help" or accelerated learning options for students or groups of students entering below grade level, and other innovations designed to create a more personalized high school

experience for students. These structural changes and personalization strategies, by themselves, are not likely to improve student academic achievement. They might, however, create valuable opportunities to improve the quality of instruction and curriculum and to provide the individualized attention and academic support that all students need to excel academically. The SLC program encourages local educational agencies (LEAs) to set higher academic expectations for all of their students and to implement reforms that will provide the effective instruction and personalized academic and social support students need to meet those expectations.

The Department's ongoing efforts to ensure improved outcomes for students enrolled in programs funded by the SLC program are reflected in this notice. Many of the changes represent an effort to provide grantees with sufficient time and resources to carry out their plans for raising academic achievement through comprehensive structural and instructional reforms. Toward that end, we are extending the project period from three to five years. In addition, we are increasing the award amounts for individual grants.

In an attempt to facilitate the application process, encourage more LEAs to apply, and raise the quality of proposals received, we have streamlined the number of selection criteria from the previous competition. The priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria in this notice continue to focus on making the curriculum more rigorous and improving instruction through SLC structures and strategies.

We published a notice of proposed priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for fiscal year (FY) 2004 and subsequent years' funds in the Federal Register on February 25, 2005 (70 FR 9290) (NPP). This notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria contains several changes from the NPP. We fully explain these changes in the following section.

Analysis of Comments and Changes

In response to our invitation in the NPP, 17 parties submitted comments. An analysis of the comments and of any changes in the priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria since publication of the NPP.

Generally, we do not address technical and other minor changes - and suggested changes the law does not authorize us to make under the applicable statutory authority.

Comments: A number of commenters were concerned that grantees with SLC projects ending this year are at a disadvantage, since they are not eligible to apply for an additional grant.

Discussion: As we proposed in the NPP, recipients of the first cohort of grants awarded in the SLC program in 2000 are eligible to apply for a grant. Based on public comments, however, we have determined that an LEA may apply on behalf of schools funded in the second cohort of grants awarded in 2001 under the SLC program as well. The requirements for improved academic achievement, continuous data collection and analysis to inform decision-making and program improvement, and third-party external evaluation of implementation are among the significant changes that are included in the program requirements starting with implementation grants awarded in 2003 (cohort 3) and continuing for grants awarded in 2004 (cohort 4). Accordingly, we do not think these grantees are at a disadvantage.

Change: We have added language in the Previous Grantees section of the notice to provide that recipients of grants in the second SLC cohort are eligible to apply for a grant under the conditions set forth in this notice. After internal review, we also have deleted the requirement that previous grantees include a copy of their final performance report in their applications.

Comments: One commenter suggested that we add a "readiness criterion" to the selection criteria that would document support from stakeholders outside of the school(s).

Discussion: We agree that the commitment of teachers, other school personnel, parents, students, and other community stakeholders is required for effective implementation of new or expansion of existing SLCs. The factors listed under the criterion Foundation for Implementation specifically address this requirement for continued involvement of all stakeholders in the planning stages and throughout the implementation process.

Changes: None.

Comments: Several commenters sought clarification regarding our proposal to prohibit a grantee from using year 1 of the grant period for planning purposes. One commenter recommended reinstatement of planning grants for \$50,000 or \$100,000 and a requirement that a grantee begin its implementation plan at the end of one year.

Discussion: When the SLC program was established, few resources were available regarding effective SLCs and efficient implementation practices. Accordingly, in the earlier years of this program, planning grants were awarded to provide funding to enable grantees to convene stakeholders for planning, to research SLCs, to visit various sites, and to participate in development opportunities as they decided whether they would apply for an implementation grant or not. Currently there are more readily available resources, planning tools, and SLC findings from research and practice that may inform the planning in schools and districts for the implementation process so that implementation can take place earlier. We do expect some new SLC implementation activities or expansion of some existing SLC to be completed during the first year of the grant; full implementation, however, is not expected in the first year of the project. As required in the selection criterion, Quality of the Management Plan, the application must include clearly defined responsibilities and detailed timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks for the project performance period.

Changes: We have added language to the Types of Grants section under Application Requirements to allow grantees to use the first year, if necessary, for some planning activities, and for investigation and piloting of SLC structural changes, strategies, services, more rigorous course offerings, and interventions that may be implemented in the SLCs as part of their whole-school reform initiative.

Comments: One commenter recommended that districts be allowed to apply for a grant on behalf of high schools under construction.

Discussion: Schools under construction do not have actual student enrollments. Consistent with language in the Conference Report for Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 (Pub. L. 108-199), we have decided that to be considered an eligible large high school for purposes of this program, the school must have an actual enrollment of 1,000 or more students at the time of application.

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter recommended that we consider citing “highly specified reform models” in the selection criterion, Quality of Project Design.

Discussion: There are many resources available for use by applicants as they decide what reform models will work best in their specific environment. Resources are available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/slcp/resources.html> and many other Web sites that may inform decision-making with regard to models and practices to use as the proposed SLC project is designed. Applicants should investigate various research-based strategies, services, and interventions that are likely to improve overall student achievements and program outcomes. Thus, a citation of “highly specified reform models” in the selection criteria is unnecessary.

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter recommended that the Department establish the performance target for the graduation rate performance indicator and give preference to applicants with the highest graduation rate in a standard number of years.

Discussion: The performance indicators and annual performance objectives included in the grant application are established by each applicant and are based upon factors at each school included in the grant application. It is not possible for us to set a target for graduation outcomes that would be realistic for all potential applicants. Further, there are no competitive preference priorities established for this competition.

Changes: None.

Comments: One commenter requested clarification regarding the award ranges and whether the recommendations were for one year or the full period of the grant.

Discussion: We agree with the commenter that potential applicants may be confused about how to calculate the amount of award they are requesting.

Changes: We have added language in the Budget Information for Determining Award section under Application Requirements that makes it clear that the award recommendations are for the 60-month grant period.

Comments: One commenter requested clarification regarding group applications.

Discussion: We realize it may be beneficial for school districts to form a consortium for development and implementation of an SLC project. Per the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), applicants may apply as a consortium. The regulations, at 34 CFR 75.127-72.129, set out the details of group applications. All members of a consortium must be eligible entities. The applicant is considered the grantee and is legally responsible for the grant. The consortium members must enter into an agreement that binds each member to every statement and assurance made by the applicant in the application, and the applicant must submit the agreement with its application.

Changes: None.

Comments: Two commenters requested clarification regarding the determination of “high-risk” status for grantees.

Discussion: Designation of a grantee as “high-risk” is based on factors that arise during the grant or may be based on past grant performance results. The designation is made only after measures have been taken by the Program Officer to help the grantee remedy any deficiencies. Any such designation would be done in accordance with 34 CFR 80.12 of EDGAR.

Changes: None.

Note: This notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use this priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, we invite applications through a notice in the Federal Register. When inviting applications we designate each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority we are particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

PRIORITY:

Priority: Helping All Students to Succeed in Rigorous Academic Courses

This priority supports projects to create or expand SLCs that will implement a coherent set of strategies and interventions that are designed to ensure that all students who enter high school with reading/language arts or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level “catch up” quickly so that, by no later than the end of the 10th grade, they have acquired the reading/language arts and mathematics skills they need to participate successfully in rigorous academic courses that will equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to transition successfully to postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training.

These accelerated learning strategies and interventions must:

- (1) Be grounded in the findings of scientifically based and other rigorous research;
- (2) Include the use of age-appropriate instructional materials and teaching and learning strategies;

(3) Provide additional instruction and academic support during the regular school day, which may be supplemented by instruction that is provided before or after school, on weekends, and at other times when school is not in session; and

(4) Provide sustained professional development and ongoing support for teachers and other personnel who are responsible for delivering instruction.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

The Assistant Secretary announces the following application requirements for this SLC competition. These requirements are in addition to the content that all SLC grant applicants must include in their applications as required by the program statute in title V, part D, subpart 4, section 5441(b) of the ESEA. LEAs, including schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and educational service agencies, applying on behalf of large public high schools, are eligible to apply for a grant.

A discussion of each application requirement follows:

Eligibility

To be considered for funding, LEAs must identify in their applications the name(s) of the eligible large high school(s) and the number of students enrolled in each school. A large high school is defined as one having grades 11 and 12, with 1,000 or more students enrolled in grades 9 and above. Enrollment figures must be based upon data from the current school year or data from the most recently completed school year. We will not accept applications from LEAs applying on behalf of schools that are being constructed and do not have an active student enrollment at the time of application. LEAs may apply on behalf of no more than 10 schools.

School Report Cards

We require that LEAs provide, for each school included in the application, the most recent “report card” produced by the State or the LEA to inform the public about the characteristics of the school and its students, including information about student academic achievement and other student outcomes. These “report cards” must include, at a minimum, the following information that LEAs are required to report for each school under section 1111(h)(2)(B)(ii) of the ESEA: (1) whether the school has been identified for school improvement and (2) information that shows how the academic assessments and other indicators of adequate yearly progress compare to those indicators for students in the LEA as a whole and also shows the performance of the school’s students on statewide assessments.

Types of Grants

We will award implementation grants to applicants to support the creation or expansion of an SLC or SLCs within each targeted high school. We will not fund any planning grants this year; however, full implementation is not expected in the first year of the grant. In the first year of the implementation grant, grantees will be allowed to continue planning activities including, but not limited to, (a) convening stakeholders who are actively involved in the continuing development of the new SLCs or expansion of SLCs at the targeted schools; (b) investigating and testing new structures and strategies to be implemented throughout the performance period; (c) piloting more rigorous academic courses and requirements to better prepare students for transition to postsecondary education; (d) surveying staff to inform the plans for high quality and sustained professional development throughout the implementation process; (e) conducting surveys of students, staff, and community stakeholders to inform continuous improvement throughout the implementation process; and (f) collecting and analyzing data to inform the initiatives planned for the implementation project.

Grants will be awarded for a period up to 60 months. We require that applicants provide detailed, yearly budget information for the total grant period requested. Understanding the unique complexities of implementing a program that affects a school’s organization, physical design, curriculum, instruction, and preparation of teachers, we will award the entire grant amount at the time of the initial award. We also

require that applicants provide detailed yearly plans, including benchmarks, for the total grant period requested.

Consortium Applications and Educational Service Agencies

In an effort to encourage systemic, district-level reform efforts, we permit an individual LEA to submit only one grant application in a competition, specifying in each application which high schools the LEA intends to fund.

In addition, we require that an LEA applying for a grant under this competition apply only on behalf of a high school or high schools for which it has governing authority, unless the LEA is an educational service agency that includes in its application evidence that the entity that has governing authority over the eligible high school supports the application. An LEA, however, may form a consortium with another LEA and submit a joint application for funds. The consortium must follow the procedures for group applications described in 34 CFR 75.127-75.129 in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).

An LEA is eligible for only one grant whether the LEA applies independently or as part of a consortium.

Budget Information for Determination of Award

LEAs may receive, on behalf of a single school, up to \$1,175,000, depending upon the size of the school. This award is for the full 60-month project period. LEAs applying on behalf of a group of eligible schools could receive up to \$11,750,000 per grant. To ensure that sufficient funds are available to support SLC activities, LEAs may not include more than 10 schools in a single application for a grant.

The following chart provides the ranges of awards per high school size for 60-month SLC grants:

SLC Grant Award Ranges	
Student Enrollment	Award Ranges Per School
1,000 - 2,000 Students	\$650,000 - \$800,000
2,001 - 3,000 Students	\$650,000 - \$925,000
3,001 – 4,000 Students	\$650,000 - \$1,050,000
4,001 and Up	\$650,000 – \$1,175,000

The actual size of awards will be based on a number of factors. These factors include the scope, quality, and comprehensiveness of the proposed project and the range of awards indicated in the application.

Applications that request more funds than the maximum amounts specified for any school or for the total grant will not be read as part of the regular application process. However, if after the Secretary selects applications to be funded, it appears that additional funds remain available, the Secretary may choose to read those additional applications that requested funds exceeding the maximum amounts specified. If the Secretary chooses to fund any of those additional applications, applicants will be required to work with the Department to revise their proposed budgets to fit within the appropriate funding range.

Student Placement

We require applicants for SLC grants to include a description of how students will be selected or placed in an SLC and an assurance that students will not be placed according to ability or any other measure, but will be placed at random or by student/parent choice and not pursuant to testing or other judgments.

Including All Students

We require applicants for grants to create or expand an SLC project that will include every student within the school by no later than the end of the fifth school year of implementation. Elsewhere in this notice, we define an SLC as an environment in which a group of teachers and other adults within the school knows the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well, closely monitors each student's progress, and provides the academic and other support each student needs to succeed.

Performance Indicators

We require applicants to identify in their application specific performance indicators and annual performance objectives for each of these indicators. Specifically, we require applicants to use the following performance indicators to measure the progress of each school:

(1) The percentage of students who score at the proficient and advanced levels on the reading/language arts and mathematics assessments used by the State to determine whether a school has made adequate yearly progress under part A of title I of the ESEA, as well as these percentages disaggregated by subject matter and the following subgroups:

- (A) Major racial and ethnic groups;
- (B) Students with disabilities;
- (C) Students with limited English proficiency; and
- (D) Economically disadvantaged students.

(2) The school's graduation rate, as defined in the State's approved accountability plan for Part A of title I of the ESEA;

(3) The percentage of graduates who enroll in postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training for the semester following graduation;

(4) The percentage of graduates who are employed by the end of the first quarter after they graduate (e.g., for students who graduate in May or June, this would be September 30);

(5) Other appropriate indicators the LEA may choose to identify in its application, such as rates of average daily attendance and year-to-year retention; achievement and gains in English proficiency of limited English proficient students; the incidence of school violence, drug and alcohol use, and disciplinary actions; or the percentage of students completing advanced placement courses and the rate of passing advanced placement tests (such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate) and courses for college credit.

Applicants are required to include in their applications baseline data for each of these indicators and identify performance objectives for each year of the project period. We further require recipients of grants to report annually on the extent to which each school achieves its performance objectives for each indicator during the preceding school year. We require grantees to include in these reports comparable data, if available, for the preceding three school years so that trends in performance will be more apparent.

Evaluation

We require each applicant to provide assurances that it will support an evaluation of the project that provides information to the project director and school personnel, and that will be useful in gauging the project's progress and in identifying areas for improvement. Each evaluation must include an annual

report for each of the first four years of the project period and a final report that would be completed at the end of the fifth year of implementation and that will include information on implementation during the fifth year as well as information on the implementation of the project across the entire project period. We require grantees to submit each of these reports to the Department.

In addition, we require that the evaluation be conducted by an independent third party, selected by the applicant, whose role in the project is limited to conducting the evaluation.

High-Risk Status and Other Enforcement Mechanisms

Requirements listed in this notice are material requirements. Failure to comply with any requirement or with any elements of the grantee's application would subject the grantee to administrative action, including but not limited to designation as a "high-risk" grantee, the imposition of special conditions, or termination of the grant. Circumstances that might cause the Department to take such action include, but are not limited to: the grantee showing a decline in student achievement after two years of implementation of the grant; the grantee's failure to make substantial progress in completing the milestones outlined in the management plan included in the application; and the grantee's expenditure of funds in a manner that is inconsistent with the budget as submitted in the application.

Required Meetings Sponsored by the Department

Applicants must set aside adequate funds within their proposed budget to send their project director to a two-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC, and to send a team of five key staff members, including their external evaluator, to attend a two-and-a-half-day Regional Institute. The Department will host both meetings.

Previous Grantees

An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the original SLC program competition held in 2000 (Cohort 1) may apply on behalf of the school for a second SLC grant under the terms set forth in this notice. An LEA that was awarded an implementation grant on behalf of a school under the competition held in 2002 (Cohort 2) may apply on behalf of the school for a second grant under the terms set forth in this notice. LEAs would not be able to apply for funding on behalf of schools that received an SLC implementation grant under the competitions held in 2003 (Cohort 3) and 2004 (Cohort 4).

DEFINITIONS

In addition to the definitions set out in the authorizing statute and 34 CFR 77.1, the following definitions also apply to this program:

BIA School means a school operated or supported by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Large High School means an entity that includes grades 11 and 12 and has an enrollment of 1,000 or more students in grades 9 and above.

Smaller Learning Community (SLC) means an environment in which a core group of teachers and other adults within the school knows the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well, closely monitors each student's progress, and provides the academic and other support each student needs to succeed.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate applications for new grants under this program. We may apply these selection criteria to any SLC competition in the future.

Note: The maximum score for a grant under this program is 100 points. The points or weights assigned to each criterion and sub-criterion are indicated in parentheses.

Need for the project (10 points)

In determining the need for the proposed project, we consider the extent to which the applicant will:

(1) Assist schools that have the greatest need for assistance, as indicated by, relative to other high schools within the State, one or more of the factors below:

(A) Student performance on the academic assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics administered by the State under Part A, Title I of the ESEA, including gaps in the performance of all students and that of student subgroups, such as economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, or students with limited English proficiency.

(B) The school's dropout rate and gaps in the graduation rate between all students and student subgroups.

(C) Disciplinary actions.

(D) The percentage of graduates who enroll in postsecondary education, apprenticeships, or advanced training in the semester following graduation, and gaps between all students and student subgroups.

Foundation for Implementation (20 points)

In determining the quality of the implementation plan for the proposed project, we consider the extent to which:

(1)(5 points) Teachers and administrators within each school support the proposed project and have been and will continue to be involved in its planning and development, including, particularly, those teachers who will be directly affected by the proposed project.

(2)(5 points) Parents, students, and other community stakeholders support the proposed project and have been and will continue to be involved in its planning and development.

(3)(5 points) The proposed project is consistent with, and will advance, State and local initiatives to increase student achievement and narrow gaps in achievement between all students and student subgroups.

(4)(5 points) The applicant demonstrates that it has carried out sufficient planning and preparatory activities to enable it to begin to implement the proposed project at the beginning of the school year immediately following receipt of an award.

Quality of the Project Design (30 points)

In determining the quality of the project design for the SLC project, we consider the extent to which --

(1)(5 points) The applicant will implement or expand strategies, new organizational structures, or other changes in practice that are likely to create an environment in which a core group of teachers and other adults within the school knows the needs, interests, and aspirations of each student well, closely monitors each student's progress, and provides the academic and other support each student needs to succeed;

(2)(5 points) The applicant proposes research-based strategies that are likely to improve overall student achievement and other outcomes (including graduation rates and enrollment in postsecondary education), narrow any gaps in achievement between all students and student subgroups, and address the particular needs identified by the school under the paragraph titled Need for the Project, such as --

(A) More rigorous academic curriculum for all students and the provision of academic support to struggling students who need assistance to master more challenging academic content;

(B) More intensive and individualized educational counseling and career and college guidance, provided through mentoring, teacher advisories, adult advocates, or other means;

(C) Strategies designed to increase average daily attendance, increase the percentage of students who transition from the 9th to 10th grade, and improve the graduation rate; and

(D) Expanding opportunities for students to participate in advanced placement courses and other academic and technical courses that offer both high school and postsecondary credit.

(3)(5 points) The applicant will implement accelerated learning strategies and interventions that will assist students who enter the school with reading/language or mathematics skills that are significantly below grade level and that:

(A) Are designed to equip participating students with grade-level reading/language arts and mathematics skills by no later than the end of the 10th grade;

(B) Are grounded in scientifically based research;

(C) Include the use of age-appropriate instructional materials and teaching and learning strategies;

(D) Provide additional instructional and academic support during the regular school day, which may be supplemented by instruction that is provided before or after school, on weekends, and at other times when school is not in session;

(E) Will be delivered with sufficient intensity to improve the reading/language arts or math skills, as appropriate, of participating students; and

(F) Include sustained professional development and ongoing support for teachers and other personnel who are responsible for delivering instruction.

(4)(5 points) The applicant will provide high-quality professional development throughout the project period that advances the understanding of teachers, administrators, and other school staff of effective, research-based instructional strategies for improving the academic achievement of students, including, particularly, students with academic skills that are significantly below grade level, and provide the knowledge and skills those staff need to participate effectively in the development, expansion, or implementation of an SLC.

(5)(5 points) The proposed project fits into a comprehensive district high school improvement strategy to increase the academic achievement of all district high school students, reduce gaps between the achievement of all students and student subgroups, and prepare students to enter postsecondary education or the workforce.

(6)(5 points) The proposed project is part of a cohesive plan that uses funds provided under the ESEA, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, or other Federal programs, as well as local, State, and private funds sufficient to ensure continuation of efforts after Federal support ends.

Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, we consider the following factors:

(1)(5 points) The adequacy of the proposed management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities and detailed timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(2)(5 points) The extent to which time commitments of the project director and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to implement the SLC project effectively.

(3)(5 points) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and other key personnel; and

(4)(5 points) The adequacy of resources, including the extent to which the budget is adequate and costs are directly related to the objectives and SLC activities.

Quality of the SLC Project Evaluation (20 points)

In determining the quality of the proposed project evaluation conducted by an independent, third party evaluator, we consider the following factors --

(1)(5 points) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed SLC project;

(2)(5 points) The extent to which the evaluation will collect and report accurate qualitative and quantitative data that will be useful in assessing the success and progress of implementation, including, at a minimum --

(A) Measures of student academic achievement that provide data for the performance indicators identified in the application, including results that are disaggregated for economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and other subgroups identified by the applicant; and

(B) Other measures identified by the applicant in the application as performance indicators;

(3)(5 points) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely and regular feedback to the LEA and the school on the success and progress of implementation and identify areas for needed improvement.

(4)(5 points) The qualifications and relevant training and experience of the independent evaluator.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with this notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits--both quantitative and qualitative--of this notice of final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, we have determined that the benefits of the final priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria justify the costs.

We have also determined that this regulatory action does not unduly interfere with State, local, and tribal governments in the exercise of their governmental functions.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive Order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

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<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.215L, Smaller Learning Communities Program)

PROGRAM AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 7249.

Dated: April 22, 2005

Susan Sclafani,
Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education.